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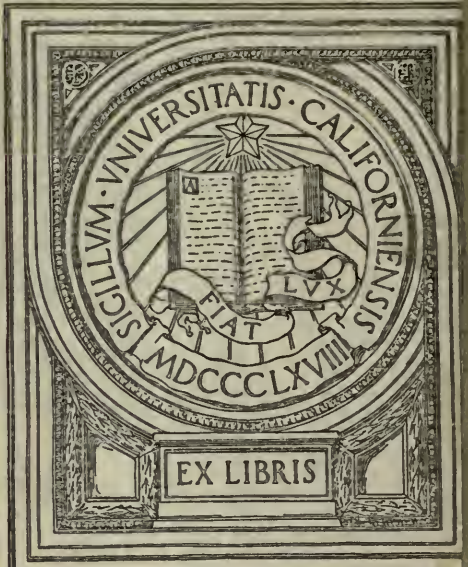

2 Vols
drs
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THE WORKS OF RICHARD SAVAGE, Esq.

SON OF

THE EARL RIVERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Tho. English

THE WORKS OF RICHARD SAVAGE, Esq.

SON OF

THE EARL RIVERS.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR,

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. I.

H. Gravelot inv. *Isaac Taylor sculp.*

LONDON:

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TO

THOMAS HARRIS, Esq.

PATENTEE OF THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

SIR,

I BEG leave to inſcribe to You, the writings of Mr. RICHARD SAVAGE, an author whoſe early love of the Drama, not the bittereſt calamities could

19351

could depreſs. His genius and misfortunes have heretofore gained him the protection of a predeceſſor of yours in the direction of the theatre—Sir RICHARD STEELE, who, like Mr. HARRIS, poſſeſſed an uncommon ſhare of benevolence. He acted as You would have done: he promoted his intereſt with the utmoſt zeal, related his misfortunes, extolled his merit, and took all opportunities of recommending him. The unfortunate SAVAGE, in return, would have joined with others in acknowledging Your worth and merit, in directing the moſt rational entertainment of an enlightened people.

people. It requires no common exertion of ſpirit, activity and abilities to be competitor for the *public favour*, with a theatre directed by the greateſt dramatic genius our country could ever boaſt: one aſſiſtance You ſhare with that Manager, the advice of a numerous group of NEWS-PAPER WITS and CRITICS, thoſe infallible judges of *every* art and ſcience; who, with a *candour and kindneſs* peculiar *to themſelves*, ſeize every opportunity to mark the moſt *minute* miſtake of manager and actor. If Your feelings and doubts ſhould make You reject the advice of ſuch eminent writers (who have

have frequently had the greateſt lawyers for their commentators) I truſt You will continue to receive, what I know You ardently wiſh—the approbation of the Public.

I am, SIR,

Your obliged Friend,

THE EDITOR.

DR. JOHNSON'S

LIFE

OF THE

AUTHOR.

LIFE

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LIFE

OF THE

AUTHOR.

IT has been obſerved in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happineſs; and that thoſe whom the ſplendor of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the ſummits of human life, have not often given any juſt occaſion to envy in thoſe who look up to them from a lower ſtation. Whether it be that apparent ſuperiority incites great deſigns, and great deſigns are naturally liable to fatal miſcarriages; or that the general lot of mankind is miſery, and the misfortunes of thoſe whoſe eminence drew upon them an univerſal attention, have been more carefully recorded, becauſe they were more generally obſerved, and have in reality been only more conſpicuous than thoſe of others, not more frequent, or more ſevere.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinſic and adventitious, and therefore eaſily ſeparable from thoſe by whom they are poſſeſſed, ſhould very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they cannot give, raiſes no aſtoniſhment: but it ſeems rational to hope, that intellectual greatneſs ſhould produce better effects; that minds qualified for great attainments ſhould firſt endeavour their own benefit; and that they who are moſt able to teach others the way to happineſs, ſhould with moſt certainty follow it themſelves.

But this expectation, however plausible, has been very frequently disappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil history have been very often no less remarkable for what they have suffered, than for what they have atchieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miseries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives, and untimely deaths.

To these mournful narratives, I am about to add the Life of Richard Savage, a man whose writings intitle him to an eminent rank in the classes of learning, and whose misfortunes claim a degree of compassion, not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the consequences of the crimes of others, rather than his own.

In the year 1697, Anne Countess of Macclesfield, having lived for some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty; and therefore declared, that the child, with which she was then great, was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be easily imagined, made her husband no less desirous of a separation than herself, and he prosecuted his design in the most effectual manner; for he applied not to the ecclesiastical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be dissolved, the nuptial contract totally annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimated. This act, after the usual deliberation, he obtained, tho' without the approbation of some, who considered marriage as an affair only cognizable by ecclesiastical judges *; and on March 3d was separated from his wife,

* This year was made remarkable by the dissolution of a marriage solemnized in the face of the church. SALMON's REVIEW.

wife, whose fortune, which was very great, was retained her, and who having, as well as her husband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a short time married to Colonel Bret.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was prosecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January 1697-8, delivered of a son, and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to consider him as his own, left none any reason to doubt of the sincerity of her declaration, for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inserted in the register of St. Andrew's parish in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as she was now set free from her husband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderness the child that had contributed to so pleasing an event. It is not indeed easy to discover what motives could be found to overbalance that natural affection of a parent, or what interest could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of shame or of poverty, by which some wretches have been incited to abandon or to murder their children, cannot be supposed to have affected a woman who had proclaimed her crime, and solicited reproach, and on whom the clemency of the legislature had undeservedly bestowed a fortune, which would have been very little diminished by the expences which

This following protest is registered in the books of the House of Lords.

Dissentient.

Because we conceive that this is the first bill of that nature that hath passed, where there was not a divorce first obtained in the Spiritual Court; which we look upon as an ill precedent, and may be of dangerous consequence in the future.

HALIFAX. ROCHESTER.

the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that she would be wicked without temptation, that she would look upon her son from his birth with a kind of resentment and abhorrence; and instead of supporting, assisting, and defending him, delight to see him struggling with misery, or that she would take every opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and obstructing his resources, and with an implacable and restless cruelty continue her persecution from the first hour of his life to the last.

But whatever were her motives, no sooner was her son born, than she discovered a resolution of disowning him; and in a very short time removed him from her sight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and injoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage: Born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and disowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obscurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be swallowed by its quicksands, or dashed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the same cruelty. As it was impossible to avoid the inquiries which the curiosity or tenderness of her relations made after her child, she was obliged to give some account of the measures that she had taken; and her mother, the Lady Mason, whether in approbation of her design, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to transact with the nurse, to pay her for her care, and to superintend the education of the child.

In

In this charitable office she was assisted by his godmother Mrs. Loyd, who, while she lived, always looked upon him with that tenderness, which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly necessary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood: for though she kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loss by a legacy of three hundred pounds, yet, as he had none to prosecute his claim, to shelter him from oppression, or call in law to the assistance of justice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was however not yet wholly abandoned. The Lady Mason still continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a small grammar-school near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intimation that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and passed through several of the classes, with what rapidity or what applause cannot now be known. As he always spoke with respect of his master, it is probable that the mean rank, in which he then appeared, did not hinder his genius from being distinguished, or his industry from being rewarded; and if in so low a state he obtained distinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and industry.

It is very reasonable to conjecture, that his application was equal to his abilities, because his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted, that if his earliest productions had been preserved, like those of happier students, we might in some have found vigorous sallies of that sprightly humour,

which distinguishes THE AUTHOR TO BE LET, and in others, strong touches of that ardent imagination which painted the solemn scenes of THE WANDERER.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father the Earl Rivers was seized with a distemper, which in a short time put an end to his life. He had frequently inquired after his son, and had always been amused with fallacious and evasive answers; but being now in his own opinion on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a positive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuse an answer, determined at least to give such as should cut him off for ever from that happiness which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the first instance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her son of a provision which was designed him by another, and which she could not expect herself, though he should lose it.

This was therefore an act of wickedness which could not be defeated, because it could not be suspected; the Earl did not imagine, that there could exist in a human form a mother that would ruin her son without enriching herself, and therefore bestowed upon some other person six thousand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The same cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this provision which had been intended him, prompted her in a short time to another project, a project worthy of such a disposition. She endeavoured to rid herself from the danger of being

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at any time made known to him, by sending him secretly to the American plantations *.

By whose kindness this scheme was counteracted, or by what interposition she was induced to lay aside her design, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Mason might persuade or compel her to desist, or perhaps she could not easily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in so cruel an action; for it may be conceived, that those who had by a long gradation of guilt hardened their hearts against the sense of common wickedness, would yet be shocked at the design of a mother to expose her son to slavery and want, to expose him without interest, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occasion find protectors and advocates among those who had long traded in crimes, and whom compassion had never touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, from banishing him into another country, she formed soon after a scheme for burying him in poverty and obscurity in his own; and that his station of life, if not the place of his residence, might keep him for ever at a distance from her, she ordered him to be placed with a shoemaker in Holborn, that after the usual time of trial, he might become his apprentice †.

It is generally reported, that this project was for some time successful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confess; nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him, that an unexpected discovery determined him to quit his occupation.

* Savage's Preface to his Miscellany.

† Preface to Savage's Miscellanies.

About this time his nurse, who had always treated him as her own son, died; and it was natural for him to care of those effects, which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own; he therefore went to her house, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he found some letters written to her by the Lady Mason, which informed him of his birth, and the reasons for which it was concealed.

He was now no longer satisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to share the affluence of his mother, and therefore without scruple applied to her as her son, and made use of every art to awaken her tenderness, and attract her regard. But neither his letters, nor the interposition of those friends which his merit or his distress procured him, made any impression upon her mind: She still resolved to neglect, though she could no longer disown him.

It was to no purpose that he frequently solicited her to admit him to see her; she avoided him with the most vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her house, by whomsoever he might be introduced, and what reason soever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the same time so touched with the discovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings * for several hours before her door, in hopes of seeing her as she might come by accident to the window, or cross her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all his assiduity and tenderness were without effect, for he could neither soften her heart, nor

* Plain Dealer. See Appendix.

open

open her hand, and was reduced to the utmoſt miſeries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother. He was therefore obliged to ſeek ſome other means of ſupport, and having no profeſſion, became, by neceſſity, an author.

At this time the attention of all the literary world was engroſſed by the Bangorian controverſy, which filled the preſs with pamphlets, and the coffee-houſes with diſputants. Of this ſubject, as moſt popular, he made choice for his firſt attempt, and without any other knowledge of the queſtion, than he had caſually collected from converſation, publiſhed a poem againſt the biſhop.

What was the ſucceſs or merit of this performance I know not; it was probably loſt among the innumerable pamphlets to which that diſpute gave occaſion. Mr. Savage was himſelf in a little time aſhamed of it, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs it, by deſtroying all the copies he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing *, and, in his eighteenth year offered to the ſtage a comedy borrowed from a Spaniſh plot, which was refuſed by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more intereſt, made ſome ſlight alterations, and brought it upon the ſtage, under the title of † Woman's a Riddle, but allowed the unhappy author no part of the profit.

Not diſcouraged however at his repulſe, he wrote two years afterwards Love in a Veil, another comedy, borrowed likewiſe from the Spaniſh, but

* Jacob's Lives of Dramatic Poets.

† This play was printed firſt in 8vo. and afterwards in 12mo. the fifth edition.

with little better success than before; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared so late in the year, that the author obtained no other advantage from it, than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilks; by whom he was pitied, caressed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which constituted his character, promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all opportunities of recommending him, and asserted, "that the inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father."

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he sometimes related an instance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very just idea of his patron's character.

He was once desired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmost importance, to come very early to his house the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promised, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to enquire; but immediately seated himself with Sir Richard; the coachman was ordered to drive, and they hurried with the utmost expedition to Hyde-Park Corner, where they stopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publish a pamphlet, and that he had desired him to come thither that he might write for him. They soon fell

* Plain Dealer.

down

down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was surprized at the meanness of the entertainment, and after some hesitation ventured to ask for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finished their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his task over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home: but his expectations deceived him; for Sir Richard told him, that he was without money; and that the pamphlet must be sold before the dinner could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his life, ought to be preserved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his house a great number of persons of the first quality, they were surprised at the number of liveries which surrounded the table; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had set them free from the observation of rigid ceremony, one of them enquired of Sir Richard, how such an expensive train of domestics could be consistent with his fortune. Sir Richard very frankly confessed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid. And being then asked, why he did not discharge them, declared that they were bailiffs who had

had introduced themselves with an execution, and whom, since he could not send them away, he had thought it convenient to embellish with liveries, that they might do him credit while they staid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt discharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promise that they should never again find him graced with a retinue of the same kind.

Under such a tutor, Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality, and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of those virtues brought upon him in the following parts of his life, might be justly imputed to so unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindness of Sir Richard end in common favours. He proposed to have established him in some settled scheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to bestow a thousand pounds. But though he was always lavish of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in such a manner, that he was very seldom able to keep his promises, or execute his own intentions; and as he was never able to raise the sum which he had offered, the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiously informed that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was so much exasperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his house.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expose himself to the malice of a talebearer; for his patron had many follies, which as his discernment easily discovered, his imagination might

might sometimes incite him to mention too ludicrously. A little knowledge of the world is sufficient to discover that such weakness is very common, and that there are few who do not sometimes, in the wantonness of thoughtless mirth, or the heat of transient resentment, speak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither sense of their kindness, nor reverence for their virtue. The fault therefore of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude; but Sir Richard must likewise be acquitted of severity, for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and supported, whose establishment he has laboured, and whose interest he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to fortune, without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man, who, whatever were his abilities or skill as an actor, deserves at least to be remembered for his virtues*, which

* As it is a loss to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I shall insert another instance of Mr. Wilks's generosity very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends designed him, left his own country, and came to London in quest of employment, but found his solicitations fruitless, and his necessities every day more pressing. In this distress he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his last hopes defeated, and he had no other prospect than of the most deplorable poverty. But Mr. Wilks thought his performance, though not perfect, at least worthy of some reward, and therefore offered him a benefit. This favour he improved with so much diligence, that the house afforded him a considerable sum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himself to the study of physic, and prosecuted his design with so much diligence and success, that when Dr. Boerhaave was desired by the Czarina to recommend proper persons to introduce into Russia the practice

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which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps leſs often in his profeſſion than in others. To be humane, generous and candid, is a very high degree of merit in any caſe; but thoſe qualities deſerve ſtill greater praiſe, when they are found in that condition, which makes almoſt every other man, for whatever reaſon, contemptuous, inſolent, petulant, ſelfiſh, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilks was one of thoſe to whom calamity ſeldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only aſſiſted him in any caſual diſtreſſes, but continued an equal and ſteady kindneſs to the time of his death.

By his interpoſition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother * fifty pounds, and a promiſe of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man, that few promiſes of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected among others with the general madneſs of the South-Sea traffic, and having been diſappointed in her expectations, refuſed to pay what perhaps nothing but the proſpect of ſudden affluence prompted her to promiſe.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendſhip of Mr. Wilks, he was conſequently an aſſiduous frequenter of the theatres, and in a ſhort time the amuſements of the ſtage took ſuch poſſeſſion of his mind, that he never was abſent from a play in ſeveral years.

and ſtudy of phyſic, Dr. Smith was one of thoſe whom he ſelected. He had a conſiderable penſion ſettled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief phyſicians at the Ruſſian court.

* This I write upon the credit of the author of his life, which was publiſhed 1727.

This

This conſtant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was ſo much pleaſed with his converſation, and touched with his misfortunes, that ſhe allowed him a ſettled penſion of fifty pounds a year, which was during her life regularly paid.

That this act of generoſity may receive its due praiſe, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be ſullied by her general character, it is proper to mention what Mr. Savage often declared in the ſtrongeſt terms, that he never ſaw her alone, or in any other place than behind the ſcenes.

At her death he endeavoured to ſhew his gratitude in the moſt decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother, but did not celebrate her in elegies, becauſe he knew that too great profuſion of praiſe would only have revived thoſe faults which his natural equity did not allow him to think leſs, becauſe they were committed by one who favoured him; but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not ſuffer him to prolong the memory, or diffuſe the cenſure.

In his WANDERER, he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her, but celebrates her not for her virtue, but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her: This is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too laviſh of his praiſe. He ſeems to have thought, that never to mention his benefactreſs would have an appearance of ingratitude, tho' to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious partiality, that, without exalting her character, would have depreſſed his own.

He had ſometimes, by the kindneſs of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occaſions he

often received uncommon marks of regard and compassion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorset, that it was just to consider him as an injured nobleman, and that in his opinion the nobility ought to think themselves obliged, without solicitation, to take every opportunity of supporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole interest of his mother was employed to frustrate his applications, and that she never left any expedient untried, by which he might be cut off from the possibility of supporting life. The same disposition she endeavoured to diffuse among all those over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed succeeded too well in her design; but could not always propagate her effrontery with her cruelty, for some of those, whom she incited against him, were ashamed of their own conduct, and boasted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this censure I do not indiscriminately involve all his relations: for he has mentioned with gratitude the humanity of one Lady, whose name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom therefore I cannot pay the praises which she deserves for having acted well in opposition to influence, precept, and example.

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its justice ever been contested; but if they deserve death, who destroy a child in its birth, what pains can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make it miserable; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities;

ties; and when his own industry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress? The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune, by enlarging his acquaintance, necessarily leading him to places of expence, he found it necessary * to endeavour once more at dramatic poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extensive knowledge, and longer observation. But having been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he resolved now to try whether he should not be more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject, was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the present age, to admit properly the fictions necessary to complete the plan; for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always most offended with the violation of those truths of which we are most certain, and we of course conceive those facts most certain, which approach nearest to our own time.

Out of this story he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumstances in which he wrote it be considered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of strength of genius, and evenness of mind, of a serenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be suppressed.

During a considerable part of the time, in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniencies for study than the fields or the street allowed him; there he used to walk and form his speeches, and afterwards step into a shop, beg for a few moments the use of the pen and ink, and write

* In 1724.

down what he had compoſed upon paper, which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus diſtreſſed is not perfect, its faults ought ſurely to be imputed to a cauſe very different from want of genius, and muſt rather excite pity than provoke cenſure.

But when under theſe diſcouragements the tragedy was finiſhed, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the ſtage, an undertaking, which, to an ingenious mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and diſguſting; for having little intereſt or reputation, he was obliged to ſubmit himſelf wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always conſidered as the diſgrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critic of a very different claſs, from whoſe friendſhip he received great aſſiſtance on many occaſions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmoſt tenderneſs and regard *. He had been for ſome time diſtinguiſhed by him with very particular kindneſs, and on this occaſion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an eſtabliſhed character. He therefore ſent this tragedy to him, with a ſhort copy of † verſes, in which he deſired his correction. Mr. Hill, whoſe humanity and politeneſs are generally known, readily complied with his requeſt; but as he is remarkable for ſingularity of ſentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject ſeveral paſſages which he could not approve; and what is ſtill more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generoſity not to reſent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the ‡ prologue and epilogue, in which he

* Vol. II. p. 181. † Ibid, p. 150.
‡ Vol. I. p. 148. 186.

touches

touches on the circumſtances of the author with great tenderneſs.

After all theſe obſtructions and compliances, he was only able to bring his play upon the ſtage in the ſummer, when the chief actors had retired, and the reſt were in poſſeſſion of the houſe for their own advantage. Among theſe, Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which nature ſeemed not to have deſigned him; for neither his voice, look, nor geſture, were ſuch as are expected on the ſtage, and he was himſelf ſo much aſhamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the liſt, when a copy of his tragedy was to be ſhown to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more ſucceſsful, for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered through all the miſts which poverty and Cibber had been able to ſpread over it, procured him the notice and eſteem of many perſons eminent for their rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits aroſe to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large ſum, having been never maſter of ſo much before.

In the dedication *, for which he received ten guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellencies of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not in the latter part of his life ſee his friends about to read without ſnatching the play out of their hands. The generoſity of Mr. Hill did not end on this occaſion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's neceſſities returned, he encouraged a ſub-

* To Herbert Tryſt, Eſq. of Herefordſhire, vol. I. p. 111.

ſcription to a Miſcellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publiſhing his ſtory in the PLAIN DEALER *, with ſome affecting lines †, which he aſſerts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the

* The PLAIN DEALER was a periodical paper written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Mr. Savage called the two contending powers of light and darkneſs. They wrote by turns each ſix Eſſays, and the character of the work was obſerved regularly to riſe in Mr. Hill's weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's.

† Hopeleſs, abandon'd, aimleſs, and oppreſs'd,
Loſt to delight, and, ev'ry way, diſtreſs'd;
Croſs his cold bed, in wild diſorder, thrown,
Thus ſigh'd Alexis, friendleſs, and alone—
Why do I breathe?—What joy can being give,
When ſhe, who gave me life; forgets I live!
Feels not theſe wintry blaſts;—nor heeds my ſmart;
But ſhuts me from the ſhelter of her heart!
Saw me expos'd to want! to ſhame! to ſcorn!
To ills!—which make it miſery to be born!
Caſt me, regardleſs, on the world's bleak wild!
And bade me be a wretch, while yet a child!
Where can he hope for pity, peace, or reſt,
Who moves no ſoftneſs in a mother's breaſt?
Cuſtom, law, reaſon, all! my cauſe forſake,
And Nature ſleeps, to keep my woes awake!
Crimes, which the cruel ſcarce believe can be,
The kind are guilty of, to ruin me.
E'en ſhe, who bore me, blaſts me with her hate,
And, meant my fortune, makes herſelf my fate.
Yet has this ſweet neglector of my woes,
The ſofteſt, tend'reſt breaſt that pity knows!
Her eyes ſhed mercy wherefoe'er they ſhine,
And her ſoul melts at ev'ry woe—but mine.
Sure then ſome ſecret fate for guilt unwil'd,
Some ſentence preordain'd to be fulfill'd!
Plung'd me thus deep in ſorrow's ſearching flood,
And wath'd me from the mem'ry of her blood.
But, oh! whatever cauſe has mov'd her hate,
Let me but ſigh, in ſilence, at my fate;
The God within perhaps may touch her breaſt,
And, when ſhe pities, who can be diſtreſs'd?

the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himself the author, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. These lines, and the paper in which they were inserted, had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her aversion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the subscription to the Miscellany, but furnished likewise the greatest part of the Poems of which it is composed, and particularly THE HAPPY MAN, which he published as a specimen.

The subscriptions of those whom these papers should influence to patronise merit in distress, without any other solicitation, were directed to be left at Button's coffee-house; and Mr. Savage going thither a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his proposal, found to his surprize seventy guineas *, which had been sent him in consequence of the compassion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic representation.

To this Miscellany he wrote a preface †, in which he

* The names of those who so generously contributed to his relief, having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Dutchess of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Castlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Dutchess Dowager, and Dutchess of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Countess Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Sofuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainsborough, Lord Milsington, Mr. John Savage.

† This Preface is as follows:

Crudelis Mater magis, an Puer improbus ille?
Improbus ille Puer, crudelis tu quoque Mater. VIRG.

My readers, I am afraid, when they observe Richard Savage joined so close, and so constantly, to 'son of the late Earl Rivers,' will impute to a ridiculous vanity, what is the effect of an unhappy necessity, which my hard fortune has thrown me under —I am to be pardoned for adhering a little tenaciously to my father,

he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon ſtrain of humour, and with a gaiety of ima-

ther, becauſe my mother will allow me to be no-body; and has almoſt reduced me, among heavier afflictions, to that uncommon kind of want, which the Indians of America complained of at our firſt ſettling among them; when they came to beg names of the Engliſh, becauſe (ſaid they) we are poor men of ourſelves, and have none we can lay claim to.

The goodnature of thoſe, to whom I have not the honour to be known, would forgive me the ludicrous turn of this beginning, if they knew but how little reaſon I have to be merry.—It was my misfortune to be ſon of the above-mentioned Earl, by the late Counteſs of Macclesfield, (now widow of Colonel Henry Bret) whoſe divorce, on occaſion of the amour which I was a conſequence of, has left ſomething on record, which I take to be very remarkable; and it is this: Certain of our great judges, in their temporal deciſions, act with a ſpiritual regard to Levitical Divinity, and in particular to the Ten Commandments; two of which ſeem, in my caſe, to have viſibly influenced their opinions—'Thou ſhalt not commit adultery,' pointed fulleſt on my mother: 'But, as to 'The Lord's viſiting the ſins of the fathers 'upon the children,' it was conſidered as what could regard me only: And for that reaſon, I ſuppoſe, it had been inconſiſtent with the rules of ſanctity, to aſſign proviſion out of my mother's return'd eſtate, for ſupport of an infant ſinner.

Thus, while legally the ſon of one Earl, and naturally of another, I am, nominally, no-body's ſon at all: For the Lady having given me too much father, thought it but an equivalent deduction to leave me no mother, by way of balance---So I am ſported into the world, a kind of ſhuttlecock, between law and nature---If law had not beaten me back, by the ſtroke of an act, on purpoſe, I had not been above wit, by the privilege of a man of quality: Nay, I might have preſerved into the bargain, the Lives of Duke Hamilton and Lord Mohun, whoſe diſpute aroſe from the eſtate of that Earl of Macclesfield, whom (but for the mentioned act) I muſt have called father---And, if nature had not ſtruck me off, with a ſtranger blow than law did, the other Earl, who was moſt emphatically my father, could never have been told, I was dead, when he was about to enable me, by his will, to have lived to ſome purpoſe. An unaccountable ſeverity of a mother! whom I was then not old enough to have deſerved it from; and by which I am a ſingle unhappy inſtance among

that

imagination, which the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription probably produced.

The

that nobleman's natural children, and thrown friendleſs on the world without means of ſupporting myſelf, and without authority to apply to thoſe, whoſe duty I know it is to ſupport me.

Thus, however ill qualified I am to live by my wits, I have the beſt plea in the world for attempting it; ſince it is too apparent that I was born to it.---Having wearied my judgment with fruitleſs endeavours to be happy, I gave the reins to my fancy, that I might learn, at leaſt, to be eaſy.

But I ceaſe a while to ſpeak of myſelf, that I may ſay ſomething of my miſcellany---I was furniſhed, by the verſes of my friends, with wit enough to deſerve a ſubſcription; but I wanted another much more profitable quality, which ſhould have emboldened me to ſolicit it (another of my wants, that, I hope, may be imputed to my mother!) I had met with little encouragement, but for the endeavours of ſome few gentlemen in my behalf, who were generous enough to conſider my ill fortune, as a merit that intitled me to their notice.

Among theſe I am particularly indebted to the author of the PLAIN DEALERS, who was pleaſed, in two of his papers (which I intreat his pardon for reprinting before my Miſcellany) to point out my unhappy ſtory to the world with ſo touching a humanity, and ſo good an effect, that many perſons of quality, of all ranks, and of both ſexes, diſtinguiſhed themſelves with the promptneſs he had hinted to the noble-minded; and not ſtaying till they were applied to, ſent me the honour of their ſubſcriptions in the moſt liberal and handſome manner for encouragement of my undertaking.

I ought here to acknowledge ſeveral favours from Mr. Hill, whoſe writings are a ſhining ornament of this Miſcellany; but I wave detaining my readers, and beg leave to refer them to a copy of verſes called THE FRIEND *, which I have taken the liberty to addreſs to that gentleman.

To return to the Lady, my mother---Had the celebrated Mr. Locke been acquainted with her example, it had certainly appeared in his chapter againſt innate practical principles; becauſe it would have completed his inſtances of enormities: Some of which, though not exactly in the order that he mentions them, are as follow—'Have there not been (ſays he) whole nations,

'and

* Vol. II. p. 181.

The Dedication is addreſſed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whom he flatters without reſerve,

'and thoſe of the moſt civilized people, amongſt whom, the 'expoſing their children to periſh by want, or wild beaſts, has 'been a practice as little condemned or ſcrupled as the begetting 'them?' Were I inclinable to be ſerious, I could eaſily prove that I have not been more gently dealt with by Mrs. Bret; but if this is any way foreign to my caſe, I ſhall find a nearer example in the whimſical one that enſues.

'It is familiar (ſays the afore-cited author) among the Mengrelians, a people profeſſing Chriſtianity, to bury their children 'alive without ſcruple'—There are indeed ſundry ſects of Chriſtians, and I have often wondered which could be my mamma's, but now I find ſhe piouſly profeſſes and practiſes Chriſtianity after the manner of the Mengrelians; ſhe induſtriouſly obſcured me, when my fortune depended on my being known, and, in that ſenſe ſhe may be ſaid to have buried me alive; and ſure, like a Mengrelian, ſhe muſt have committed the action without ſcruple; for ſhe is a woman of ſpirit, and can ſee the conſequence without remorſe—'The Caribees (continues my author) were wont to 'caſtrate their children, in order to fat and eat them'—Here indeed I can draw no parallel; for to ſpeak juſtice of the Lady, ſhe never contributed ought to have me pampered, but always promoted my being ſtarved: Nor did ſhe, even in my infancy, betray fondneſs enough to be ſuſpected of a deſign to devour me; but, on the contrary, not enduring me ever to approach her, offered a bribe to have me ſlipped off, in an odd manner, to one of the plantations—When I was about fifteen her affection began to awake, and had I but known my intereſt, I had been handſomely provided for. In ſhort, I was ſolicited to be bound apprentice to a very honeſt and reputable occupation—a ſhoemaker; an offer which I undutifully rejected. I was, in fine, unwilling to underſtand her in a literal ſenſe, and hoped, that, like the prophets of old, ſhe might have hinted her mind in a kind of parable, or proverbial way of ſpeaking; as thus—That one time or other I might, on due application, have the honour of taking the length of her foot.

Mr. Locke mentions another ſet of people that diſpatch their children, if a pretended aſtrologer declares them to have unhappy ſtars—Perhaps my mamma has procured ſome cunning man to calculate my nativity; or having had ſome ominous dream, which

preceded

ſerve, and, to confeſs the truth, with very little * art. The ſame obſervation may be extended to all his Dedications: his compliments are conſtrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order, or the decency of introduction: he ſeems to have written his Panegyrics for the peruſal only of his patrons, and to have imagined that he had no other taſk than to pamper them with praiſes however groſs, and that flattery would make its way to the heart, without the aſſiſtance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards the death of the king furniſhed a general ſubject for a poetical conteſt, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors; but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increaſe of his reputation; though it muſt certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed

preceded my birth, the dire event may have appeared to her in the dark and dreary bottom of a China cup, where coffee-ſtains are often conſulted for prophecies, and held as infallible as were the leaves of the ancient Sybils—To be partly ſerious: I am rather willing to wrong her judgment, by ſuſpecting it to be tainted a little with the tenets of ſuperſtition, than ſuppoſe ſhe can be miſtreſs of a ſeared conſcience, and act on no principle at all.

* This the following extract from it will prove.

'—'Since our country has been honoured with the glory of 'your wit, as elevated and immortal as your ſoul, it no longer 'remains a doubt whether your ſex have ſtrength of mind in pro- 'portion to their ſweetneſs. There is ſomething in your verſes, 'as diſtinguiſhed as your air—They are as ſtrong as truth, 'as deep as reaſon, as clear as innocence, and as ſmooth as beauty '—They contain a nameleſs and peculiar mixture of force and 'grace, which is at once ſo movingly ſerene, and ſo majeſtically 'lovely, that it is too amiable to appear any where but in your 'eyes and in your writings.

'As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of 'flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to your 'Ladyſhip, becauſe there is ſcarce a poſſibility that I ſhould ſay 'more than I believe, when I am ſpeaking of your Excellence.'—

prevailed upon himself to attempt a species of writing, of which all the topics had been long before exhausted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and those that had succeeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very distressful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by an event, of which it is not yet determined, whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might pursue his studies with less interruption, with an intent to discharge another lodging which he had in Westminster, and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whose names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffee-house, and sat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the first of the company that desired to separate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the same house, but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the streets, and divert themselves with such amusements as should offer themselves till morning.

In their walk they happened unluckily to discover light in Robinson's coffee-house near Charing-cross, and therefore went in. Merchant, with some rudeness, demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not satisfied with this answer, rushed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himself between the company and the fire, and soon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel, swords were drawn on both

sides,

ſides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage having wounded likewiſe a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the houſe; but being intimidated and confuſed, without reſolution either to fly or ſtay, they were taken in a back court by one of the company and ſome ſoldiers, whom he had called to his aſſiſtance.

Being ſecured and guarded that night, they were in the morning carried before three juſtices, who committed them to the Gatehouſe, from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the ſame day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with ſome diſtinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined, not among the common criminals, but in the Preſs-yard.

When the day of trial came, the court was crouded in a very unuſual manner, and the public appeared to intereſt itſelf as in a cauſe of general concern. The witneſſes againſt Mr. Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the houſe, which was a houſe of ill fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been ſeen in bed. They ſwore in general, that Merchant gave the provocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their ſwords to juſtify; that Savage drew firſt, and that he ſtabbed Sinclair when he was not in a poſture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his ſword; that after he had given the thruſt he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There

There was some difference in their depositions; one did not see Savage give the wound, another saw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the town asserted, that she did not see Sinclair's sword at all: This difference however was very far from amounting to inconsistency, but it was sufficient to shew, that the hurry of the dispute was such, that it was not easy to discover the truth with relation to particular circumstances, and that therefore some deductions were to be made from the credibility of the testimonies.

Sinclair had declared several times before his death, that he received his wound from Savage, nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it, by urging the suddenness of the whole action, and the impossibility of any ill design, or premeditated malice, and partly to justify it by the necessity of self-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had lost that opportunity of giving the thrust: He observed, that neither reason nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he should suffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an assault, and to preserve life by taking away that of the adversary, by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to escape, he declared, that it was not his design to fly from justice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and severities of a prison, and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulsion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the most attentive and respectful silence: Those who thought he ought not to be acquitted, owned that

applause

applauſe could not be refuſed him; and thoſe who before pitied his misfortunes, now reverenced his abilities.

The witneſſes which appeared againſt him were proved to be perſons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit; a common ſtrumpet, a woman by whom ſtrumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were ſupported; and the character of Savage was by ſeveral perſons of diſtinction aſſerted to be that of a modeſt inoffenſive man, not inclined to broils, or to inſolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his uſual inſolence and ſeverity, and when he had ſummed up the evidence, endeavoured to exaſperate the jury, as Mr. Savage uſed to relate it, with this eloquent harangue.

'Gentlemen of the jury, you are to conſider that 'Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater 'man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he 'wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you 'or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance 'of money in his pocket, much more money than 'you or I, gentlemen of the jury; but gentlemen of 'the jury, is it not a very hard caſe, gentlemen of 'jury, that Mr. Savage ſhould therefore kill you or 'me, gentlemen of the jury?'

Mr. Savage hearing his defence thus miſrepreſented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited againſt him by invidious compariſons, reſolutely aſſerted, that his cauſe was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before ſaid with regard to his condition, and the neceſſity of endeavouring to eſcape the expences of impriſonment; but the judge having ordered him to be ſilent, and repeated his orders without

out effect, commanded that he ſhould be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the judge, that good characters were of no weight againſt poſitive evidence, though they might turn the ſcale, where it was doubtful; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only manſlaughter; but where one is the aggreſſor, as in the caſe before them, and in purſuance of his firſt attack, kills the other, the law ſuppoſes the action, however ſudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Merchant, who had no ſword, only of manſlaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which laſted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to priſon, where they were more cloſely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight: Four days afterwards they were ſent back to the court to receive ſentence; on which occaſion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following ſpeech.

'It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any thing 'by way of defence or vindication; nor can we ex- 'pect ought from your Lordſhips, in this court, but 'the ſentence which the law requires you, as judges, 'to pronounce againſt men of our calamitous condi- 'tion.—But we are alſo perſuaded, that as mere 'men, and out of this ſeat of rigorous juſtice, you 'are ſuſceptive of the tender paſſions, and too hu- 'mane, not to commiſerate the unhappy ſituation of 'thoſe, whom the law ſometimes perhaps—exacts— 'from you to pronounce upon. No doubt you diſ- 'tinguiſh between offences, which ariſe out of pre- 'meditation, and a diſpoſition habituated to vice or

'immorality

'immorality, and tranſgreſſions, which are the unhappy and unforeſeen effects of caſual abſence of reaſon, and ſudden impulſe of paſſion: We therefore hope you will contribute all you can to an extenſion of that mercy, which the gentlemen of the jury have been pleaſed to ſhew Mr. Merchant, who (allowing facts as ſworn againſt us by the evidence) has led us into this our calamity. I hope this will not be conſtrued, as if we meant to reflect upon that gentleman, or remove any thing from us upon him, or that we repine the more at our fate, becauſe he has no participation of it: No, my Lord! For my part, I declare nothing could more ſoften my grief, than to be without any companion in ſo great a misfortune *.'

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earneſtly ſolicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the ſtory may obtain belief, was obſtructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen againſt him, ſhe made uſe of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpoſe which it was made to ſerve. Mr. Savage, when he had diſcovered his birth, had an inceſſant deſire to ſpeak to his mother, who always avoided him in public, and refuſed him admiſſion into her houſe.

One evening walking, as it was his cuſtom, in the ſtreet that ſhe inhabited, he ſaw the door of her houſe by accident open; he entered it, and finding no perſons in the paſſage to hinder him, went up ſtairs to ſalute her. She diſcovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the moſt diſtreſsful outcries, and when ſhe had by her ſcreams

* Mr. Savage's Life.

gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain, who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the most submissive tenderness to soften her rage, hearing her utter so detestable an accusation, thought it prudent to retire, and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to speak to her.

But shocked as he was with her falsehood and her cruelty, he imagined that she intended no other use of her lie, than to set herself free from his embraces and solicitations, and was very far from suspecting that she would treasure it in her memory, as an instrument of future wickedness, or that she would endeavour for this fictitious assault to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was solicited for his pardon, and informed of the severe treatments which he had suffered from his judge, she answered, that however unjustifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, she could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy, who had been capable of entering his mother's house in the night, with an intent to murder her.

By whom this attrocious calumny had been transmitted to the Queen; whether she that invented had the front to relate it; whether she found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful design, I know not; but methods had been taken to persuade the Queen so strongly of the truth of it, that she for a long time refused to hear any of those who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, a strumpet, and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too

eminent

eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all the tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity, and demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder, that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity.

The interposition of this Lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728, pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to enquire upon what motives his mother could persecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable; for what reason she could employ all the acts of malice, and all the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son, of a son who never injured her, who was never supported by her expence, nor obstructed any prospect of pleasure or advantage; why she should endeavour to destroy him by a lie; a lie which could not gain credit, but must vanish of itself at the first moment of examination, and of which only this can be said to make it probable, that it may be observed from her conduct, that the most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is still alive, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was so often defeated, enjoy the pleasure of reflecting, that the life which she often endeavoured to destroy, was at least shortened by her maternal offices; that though she could not transport her son to the plantations, bury him in the shop of a mechanic, or hasten the hand of the public execu-

tioner, she has yet had the satisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigencies, that hurried on his death.

It is by no means necessary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in opposition to that of the Countess of Hertford; no one can fail to observe how much more amiable it is to relieve, than to oppress, and to rescue innocence from destruction, than to destroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his imprisonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under sentence of death, behaved with great firmness and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the esteem of those, who before admired him for his abilities. The peculiar circumstances of his life were made more generally known by a short account *, which was then published, and of which several thousands were in a few weeks dispersed over the nation; and the compassion of mankind operated so powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled, by frequent presents, not only to support himself, but to assist Mr. Gregory in prison; and when he was pardoned and released, he found the number of his friends not lessened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itself doubtful; of the evidences which appeared against him, the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the woman notoriously infamous: she whose testimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him, afterwards retracted her assertions. He always himself denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now Collector of Antegua, is said to declare him far less criminal than he was imagined, even by some who favoured him: And Page himself afterwards confessed, that he had treated him with uncommon ri-

* Written by Mr. Beckingham and another gentleman.

gour. When all these particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much sullied by his trial.

Some time after he had obtained his liberty, he met in the street the woman that had sworn with so much malignity against him. She informed him, that she was in distress, and, with a degree of confidence not easily attainable, desired him to relieve her. He, instead of insulting her misery, and taking pleasure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury, and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himself.

This is an action which in some ages would have made a saint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without an hyperbolical encomiums, must be allowed to be an instance of uncommon generosity, an act of complicated virtue; by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the strongest provocations, and exercised the most ardent charity.

Compassion was indeed the distinguishing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakness, to attack the defenceless, or to press upon the falling: whoever was distressed was certain at least of his good wishes; and when he could give no assistance, to extricate them from misfortunes, he endeavoured to sooth them by sympathy and tenderness.

But when his heart was not softened by the sight of misery, he was sometimes obstinate in his resentment, and did not quickly lose the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to speak with anger of the insolence and partiality of Page, and a short time before his death revenged it by a satire *.

* Vol. II. p. 208.

It is natural to enquire in what terms Mr. Savage ſpoke of this fatal action, when the danger was over, and he was under no neceſſity of uſing any art to ſet his conduct in the faireſt light. He was not willing to dwell upon it, and if he tranſiently mentioned it, appeared neither to conſider himſelf as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood *. How much and how long he regretted it, appeared in a † poem which he publiſhed many years afterwards. On occaſion of a copy of verſes, in which the failings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illuſtrate his poſition, that, 'the 'beſt may ſometimes deviate from virtue,' by an inſtance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked, that it was no very juſt repreſentation of a good man, to ſuppoſe him liable to drunkenneſs, and diſpoſed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other ſupport than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; ſources by which he was ſometimes very liberally ſupplied, and which at other times were ſuddenly ſtopped; ſo that he ſpent his life between want and plenty, or, what was yet worſe, between beggary and extravagance; for as whatever he received was the gift of chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to ſquander what he had, becauſe he always hoped to be immediately ſupplied.

Another cauſe of his profuſion was the abſurd kindneſs of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities, by treating him at taverns, and habituated him to pleaſures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himſelf, tho'

* In one of his letters he ſtiles it 'a fatal quarrel, but too 'well known.'

† Vol. II. p. 93.

he

he purchaſed the luxury of a ſingle night by the anguiſh of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of theſe inconveniencies determined him to endeavour after ſome ſettled income, which, having long found ſubmiſſion and intreaties fruitleſs, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, loſt that tenderneſs for her, which the whole ſeries of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repreſs, till he found, by the efforts which ſhe made for his deſtruction, that ſhe was not content with refuſing to aſſiſt him, and being neutral in his ſtruggles with poverty, but was as ready to ſnatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes, and that ſhe was to be conſidered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could ſatisfy. He therefore threatened to haraſs her with lampoons, and to publiſh a copious narrative of her conduct, unleſs ſhe conſented to purchaſe an exemption from infamy, by allowing him a penſion.

This expedient proved ſucceſsful. Whether ſhame ſtill ſurvived, though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herſelf, and imagined that ſome of the darts which ſatire might point at her would glance upon them: Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promiſe to lay aſide his deſign of expoſing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a penſion of two hundred pounds a year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life; and for ſome time he had no reaſon to complain of fortune; his appearance was ſplendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance extenſive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and careſſed by all who valued themſelves upon a refined

taſte. To admire Mr. Savage was a proof of diſcernment, and to be acquainted with him was a title to poetical reputation. His preſence was ſufficient to make any place of public entertainment popular; and his approbation and example conſtituted the faſhion. So powerful is genius, when it is inveſted with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleaſed when they have an opportunity at once of gratifying their vanity, and practiſing their duty.

This interval of proſperity furniſhed him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its higheſt gradations to its loweſt, and had he afterwards applied to dramatic poetry he would perhaps not have had many ſuperiors; for as he never ſuffered any ſcene to paſs before his eyes without notice, he had treaſured in his mind all the different combinations of paſſions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue, which diſtinguiſh one character from another; and as his conception was ſtrong, his expreſſions were clear, he eaſily received impreſſions from objects, and very forcibly tranſmitted them to others.

Of his exact obſervations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greateſt names, in a ſmall pamphlet, called, THE AUTHOR TO BE LET *, where he introduces Iſcariot Hackney, a proſtitute ſcribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his diſpoſition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many ſecret hiſtories of the petty writers of that time, but ſometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumſtances, or thoſe of their relations; nor can it be denied, that ſome paſ-

* Vol. II. p. 237.

ſages

ſages are ſuch as Iſcariot Hackney might himſelf have produced.

He was accuſed likewiſe of living in an appearance of friendſhip with ſome whom he ſatiriſed, and of making uſe of the confidence which he gained by a ſeeming kindneſs to diſcover failings and expoſe them: it muſt be confeſſed, that Mr. Savage's eſteem was no very certain poſſeſſion, and that he would lampoon at one time thoſe whom he had praiſed at another.

It may be alleged that the ſame man may change his principles, and that he who was once deſervedly commended, may be afterwards ſatiriſed with equal juſtice, or that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more nearly, unworthy of the panegyric which he had too haſtily beſtowed; and that as a falſe ſatire ought to be recanted, for the ſake of him whoſe reputation may be injured, falſe praiſe ought likewiſe to be obviated, leſt the diſtinction between vice and virtue ſhould be loſt, leſt a bad man ſhould be truſted upon the credit of his encomiaſt, or leſt others ſhould endeavour to obtain the like praiſes by the ſame means.

But though theſe excuſes may be often plauſible, and ſometimes juſt, they are very ſeldom ſatisfactory to mankind; and the writer, who is not conſtant to his ſubject, quickly ſinks into contempt, his ſatire loſes its force, and his panegyric its value, and he is only conſidered at one time as a flatterer, and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid theſe imputations, it is only neceſſary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preſerve an unvaried regard to truth. For though it is undoubtedly poſſible, that a man, however cautious, may be ſometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by falſe evidences of guilt, ſuch errors will not be frequent;

and

and it will be allowed, that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible, had no man ever said what he did not think, or misled others, but when he was himself deceived.

If THE AUTHOR TO BE LET was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a collection of pieces relating to the Dunciad, which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a * dedication which he was prevailed upon to sign, tho' he did not write it, and in which there are some positions, that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrolled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the 'Liberties taken by the writers of Journals with their 'superiors were exorbitant and unjustifiable,' very ill became men, who have themselves not always shewn the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirised those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom. But this is only an instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself; the liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborn by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who command, and dangerous and oppressive by those who support it.

* Vol. II. p. 239.

Mr.

Mr. Savage was likewiſe very far from believing, that the letters annexed to each ſpecies of bad poets in the Bathos, were, as he was directed to aſſert, 'ſet 'down at random;' for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to ſuch an improbability, he had no other anſwer to make, than that 'he did not think of it,' and his friend had too much tenderneſs to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is falſe in this dedication, it is proper that I obſerve the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage aſſerted, that the account of the circumſtances which attended the publication of the Dunciad, however ſtrange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raiſed Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among thoſe that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was conſidered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was ſuſpected of ſupplying with private intelligence and ſecret incidents: ſo that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a ſatiriſt.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocriſy, and that he ſometimes ſpoke one thing, and wrote another, cannot be denied; becauſe he himſelf confeſſed, that when he lived in great familiarity with Dennis, he wrote an epigram * againſt him.

* This epigram was, I believe, never publiſhed.

Should Dennis publiſh you had ſtabb'd your brother,
Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother;
Say, what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
On one ſo poor you cannot take the law,
On one ſo old your ſword you ſcorn to draw:
Uncag'd, then, let the harmleſs monſter rage,
Secure in dulneſs, madneſs, want, and age.

Mr.

Mr. Savage however set all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendship of Mr. Pope cheaply purchased by being exposed to their censure and their hatred; nor had he any reason to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a steady and unalienable friend almost to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithstanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he published a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a sum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron be considered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a person of yet higher rank, and more desirous in appearance of being distinguished as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in conversation mentioned him sometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of those who were always zealous in their assertions of the justice of the late opposition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the court; it was natural to ask him what could induce him to employ his poetry in praise of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppressor of his country? He alleged, that he was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was, an implicit follower of the ministry, and that being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praise of his leader, he had not resolution sufficient to sacrifice the pleasure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occasions, he was ready to lament the misery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had,

for

for three months together, a settled habitation, in which he could claim a right of residence.

To this unhappy state it is just to impute much of the inconstancy of his conduct; for though a readiness to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was sometimes obliged to relax his obstinacy, and submit his own judgment and even his virtue to the government of those by whom he was supported: so that if his miseries were sometimes the consequences of his faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compassion, because his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period * of his life, while he was surrounded by affluence and pleasure, he published THE WANDERER, a moral Poem, of which the design is comprised in these lines:

I fly all public care, all venal strife,
To try the still compar'd with active life;
To prove, by these the sons of men may owe
The fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe;
That e'en calamity, by thought refin'd,
Inspirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more distinctly in the following passage:

By woe, the soul to daring action swells;
By woe, in plaintless patience it excels;
From patience, prudent clear experience springs,
And traces knowledge thro' the course of things:
Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
Renown:—whate'er men covet and cares.

This performance was always considered by himself as his master-piece; and Mr. Pope, when he asked his opinion of it, told him, that he read it once over, and was not displeased with it, that it gave him more

* 1729.

more pleasure at the second perusal, and delighted him still more at the third.

It has been generally objected to THE WANDERER, that the disposition of the parts is irregular, that the design is obscure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, succeed each other without order; and that the whole performance is not so much a regular fabric, as a heap of shining materials thrown together by accident, which strikes rather with the solemn magnificence of a stupendous ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finished pile.

This criticism is universal, and therefore it is reasonable to believe it at least in a great degree just; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be missed by negligence or stupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts distinct.

It was never denied to abound with strong representations of nature, and just observations upon life, and it may easily be observed, that most of his pictures have an evident tendency to illustrate his first great position, 'that good is the consequence of evil. The sun that burns up the mountains, fructifies the vales; the deluge that rushes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuosity, is separated into purling-brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.'

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother *, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impression it had upon his mind.

This must be at least acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellencies, that this poem can promote no other purposes than those of virtue, and that it is written with a very strong sense of the efficacy of religion.

* Vol. II. p. 41.

But

But my province is rather to give the history of Mr. Savage's performances, than to display their beauties, or to obviate the criticisms which they have occasioned, and therefore I shall not dwell upon the particular passages which deserve applause: I shall neither show the excellence of his descriptions *, nor expatiate on the terrific portrait of suicide †, nor point out the artful touches ‡, by which he has distinguished the intellectual features of the rebels, who suffer death in his last canto. It is, however, proper to observe, that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the least allusion to any real persons or actions.

From a poem so diligently laboured, and so successfully finished, it might be reasonably expected that he should have gained considerable advantage; nor can it, without some degree of indignation and concern, be told, that he sold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two last sheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his absence intrusted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A superstitious regard to the correction of his sheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he often altered, revised, recurred to his first reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irresolute without end, as on a question of the last importance, and at last was seldom satisfied: the intrusion or omission of a comma was sufficient to discompose him, and he would lament an error of a single letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impression of some verses, he remarks, that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, 'a spell upon him;' and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minutest and most trifling

* Vol. II. p. 59. † Ibid. p. 27. ‡ Ibid. p. 73.

niceties,

niceties, deſerved no other name than that of faſcination.

That he ſold ſo valuable a performance for ſo ſmall a price was not to be imputed either to neceſſity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to ſubmit to very hard conditions, or to avarice, by which the bookſellers are frequently incited to oppreſs that genius by which they are ſupported, but to that intemperate deſire of pleaſure, and habitual ſlavery to his paſſions, which involved him in many perplexities; he happened at that time to be engaged in the purſuit of ſome trifling gratification, and being without money for the preſent occaſion, ſold his poem to the firſt bidder, and perhaps for the firſt price that was propoſed, and would probably have been content with leſs, if leſs had been offered him.

This poem was addreſſed to the Lord Tyrconnel not only in the firſt lines*, but in a formal dedication filled with the higheſt ſtrains of panegyric, and the warmeſt profeſſions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connection or elegance of ſtile.

Theſe praiſes in a ſhort time he found himſelf inclined to retract, being diſcarded by the man on whom he had beſtowed them, and whom he then immediately diſcovered not to have deſerved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage aſſigned very different reaſons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed, that it was the conſtant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that propoſed it, drink the moſt expenſive wines with great profuſion, and when the reckoning was demanded, to be without money: If, as it often happened, his company were willing to

* Vol. II. p. 7.

defray

defray his part, the affair ended, without any ill consequences; but if they were refractory, and expected that the wine should be paid for by him that drank it, his method of composition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, assume the government of the house, and order the butler in an imperious manner to set the best wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the respect due to the house in which they were entertained, indulged themselves in the utmost extravagance of merriment, practised the most licentious frolics, and committed all the outrages of drunkenness.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought against him: Having given him a collection of valuable books, stamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to see them in a short time exposed to sale upon the stalls, it being usual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a small sum, to take his books to the pawnbroker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage easily credited both these accusations; for having been obliged from his first entrance into the world to subsist upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them; and so much was he delighted with wine and conversation, and so long had he been accustomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go to the tavern without scruple, and trust for his reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was very little known. This conduct indeed very seldom drew upon him those inconveniences that might be feared by any other person; for his conversation was so entertaining, and his address so pleasing, that few thought the pleasure which they received from him dearly purchased, by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happiness, that he scarcely ever found a stranger, whom he did

not leave a friend; but it muſt likewiſe be added, that he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become a ſtranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel * quarrelled with him, becauſe he would ſubtract from his own luxury and extravagance, what he had promiſed to allow him, and that his reſentment was only a plea for the violation of his promiſe: He aſſerted, that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that ſubſiſtence which he thought not ſo much a favour, as a debt, ſince it was offered him upon conditions, which he had never broken; and that his only fault was, that he could not be ſupported with nothing.

He acknowledged, that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to ſpend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared very deſirous, that he would paſs thoſe hours with him, which he ſo freely beſtowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage conſidered as a cenſure of his conduct, which he could never patiently bear; and which in the latter and cooler part of his life was ſo offenſive to him, that he declared it as his reſolution, 'to ſpurn 'that friend who ſhould preſume to dictate to him;' and it is not likely, that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmneſs.

He was likewiſe inclined to reſent ſuch expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was neceſſary to the gratification of his paſſions, and declared, that the requeſt was ſtill more unreaſonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was inſupportably diſagreeable. This aſſertion affords another inſtance of that incon-

* His expreſſion in one of his letters, was, 'that Lord T——l 'had involved his eſtate, and therefore poorly ſought an occaſion 'to quarrel with him.'

ſiſtency

ſiſtency of his writings with his converſation, which was ſo often to be obſerved. He forgot how laviſhly he had, in his * Dedication to THE WANDERER, extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generoſity, the candour and politeneſs of the man, whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without underſtanding, without good nature, and without juſtice; of whoſe name he thought himſelf obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings; and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of THE WANDERER which was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel, he wrote † THE TRIUMPH OF HEALTH AND MIRTH, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languiſhing illneſs. This performance is remarkable, not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth, overwhelmed with ſorrow for the ſickneſs of her favourite, takes a flight in queſt of her ſiſter Health, whom ſhe finds reclined upon the brow of a lofty mountain, amidſt the fragrance of perpetual ſpring, with the breezes of the morning ſporting about her. Being ſolicited by her ſiſter Mirth, ſhe readily promiſes her aſſiſtance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the ſickneſs of Belinda is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumſtances of his birth and life, the ſplendour of his appearance, and the diſtinction which was for ſome time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, intitled him to familiarity with perſons of higher rank, than thoſe to whoſe converſation he had been before admitted, he did not fail to gratify that curioſity, which induced him to take a nearer view of thoſe whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, neceſſarily

* Vol. II. p. 3. † Vol. II. p. 99.

place at a diſtance from the greateſt part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminiſhed by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the ſplendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themſelves, or only reflected on them by the objects that ſurrounded them; and whether great men were ſelected for high ſtations, or high ſtations made great men.

For this purpoſe he took all opportunities of converſing familiarly with thoſe who were moſt conſpicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looſer moments, and examined their domeſtic behaviour with that acuteneſs which nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increaſe, and that inquiſitiveneſs which muſt always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an abſolute freedom from all preſſing or domeſtic engagements. His diſcernment was quick, and therefore he ſoon found in every perſon, and in every affair, ſomething that deſerved attention; he was ſupported by others, without any care for himſelf, and was therefore at leiſure to purſue his obſervations.

More circumſtances to conſtitute a critic on human life could not eaſily concur, nor indeed could any man, who aſſumed from accidental advantages more praiſe than he could juſtly claim from his real merit, admit an acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage; of whom likewiſe it muſt be confeſſed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from paſſion, or proof againſt corruption, could not eaſily find an abler judge, or a warmer advocate.

What was the reſult of Mr. Savage's enquiry, though he was not much accuſtomed to conceal his diſcoveries, it may not be entirely ſafe to relate, becauſe the perſons whoſe characters he criticiſed are powerful;

powerful; and power and reſentment are ſeldom ſtrangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly juſt, becauſe what he aſſerted in converſation might, though true in general, be heightened by ſome momentary ardour of imagination, and as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly repreſented; ſo that the picture at firſt aggravated, and then unſkilfully copied, may be juſtly ſuſpected to retain no great reſemblance of the original.

It may however be obſerved, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of thoſe to whom the adminiſtration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, has been intruſted; who have been conſidered as the advocates of the crown, or the guardians of the people, and who have obtained the moſt implicit confidence, and the loudeſt applauſes. Of one particular perſon, who has been at one time ſo popular as to be generally eſteemed, and at another ſo formidable as to be univerſally deteſted, he obſerved, that his acquiſitions had been ſmall, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obſcenity to politics, and from politics to obſcenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his ſpeculations on great characters was now at an end. He was baniſhed from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without proſpect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was diſtinguiſhed, he had made no proviſion againſt a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined, but that the ſeparation muſt for ſome time have been preceded by coldneſs, peeviſhneſs, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the conſequence of accumulated provocations on both ſides, yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was ſudden as a ſtroke of thunder; that though he might have tranſiently ſuſpected it, he had

never suffered any thought so unpleasing to sink into his mind, but that he had driven it away by amusements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any measures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and separation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was exposed by them, were soon known both to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the lustre of genius, by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compassion; for he had not always been careful to use the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation, which ought to have been with more than usual caution preserved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to support him no longer than he endeavoured to preserve his favour, by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheless set at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be sought at any great distance to prove, that superiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride seldom fails to exert itself in contempt and insult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merit of others, it is some extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his prosperity was heightened, by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a sense of the misery in which he had so long languished, and perhaps of the insults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himself entitled to revenge. It is too common for those who have unjustly suffered pain, to inflict it likewise

likewiſe in their turn, with the ſame injuſtice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themſelves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune, is generally known; and ſome paſſages of his Introduction to THE AUTHOR TO BE LET ſufficiently ſhew, that he did not wholly refrain from ſuch ſatire as he afterwards thought very unjuſt, when he was expoſed to it himſelf; for when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a diſtreſſed poet, he very eaſily diſcovered, that diſtreſs was not a proper ſubject for merriment, or topic of invective. He was then able to diſcern, that if miſery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be reverenced; if of ill-fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be inſulted, becauſe it is perhaps itſelf a puniſhment adequate to the crime by which it was produced. And the humanity of that man can deſerve no panegyric, who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But theſe reflections, though they readily occurred to him in the firſt and laſt parts of his life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forgotten; at leaſt they were, like many other maxims, treaſured up in his mind, rather for ſhew than uſe, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might ſometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate them.

His degradation therefore from the condition which he had enjoyed with ſuch wanton thoughtleſſneſs, was conſidered by many as an occaſion of triumph. Thoſe who had before paid their court to him, without ſucceſs, ſoon returned the contempt which they had ſuffered, and they who had received favours from him, for of ſuch favours as he could beſtow he was very liberal, did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of reſentment than of gratitude: it is not only to many more pleaſing to recollect thoſe

faults which place others below them, than those virtues by which they are themselves comparatively depressed; but it is likewise more easy to neglect, than to recompense; and tho' there are few who will practise a laborious virtue, there will never be wanting multitudes that will indulge an easy vice.

Savage however was very little disturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill-fortune brought upon him, from those whom he never esteemed, and with whom he never considered himself as levelled by any calamities; and though it was not without some uneasiness that he saw some, whose friendship he valued, change their behaviour; he yet observed their coldness without much emotion, considered them as the slaves of fortune and the worshippers of prosperity; and was more inclined to despise them, than to lament himself.

It does not appear, that after this return of his wants, he found mankind equally favourable to him, as at his first appearance in the world. His story, though in reality not less melancholy, was less affecting, because it was no longer new; it therefore procured no new friends, and those that had formerly relieved him thought they might now consign him to others. He was now likewise considered by many rather as criminal, than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel, and of his mother, were sufficiently industrious to publish his weaknesses, which were indeed very numerous, and nothing was forgotten, that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined, that such representations of his faults must make great numbers less sensible of his distress; many who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no scruple to propagate the account which they received; many assisted their circulation from malice or revenge, and perhaps many pretended

tended to credit them, that they might with a better grace withdraw their regard, or with-hold their assistance.

Savage however was not one of those, who suffered himself to be injured without resistance, nor was less diligent in exposing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at least this advantage, that he drove him first to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was so much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants, that did no honour to his courage, to beat him at a coffee-house. But it happened that he had left the place a few minutes, and his lordship had without danger the pleasure of boasting, how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to repay his visit at his own house, but was prevailed on by his domestics, to retire without insisting upon seeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accused by Mr. Savage of some actions, which scarcely any provocations will be thought sufficient to justify; such as seizing what he had in his lodgings, and other instances of wanton cruelty, by which he encreased the distress of Savage, without any advantage to himself.

These mutual accusations were retorted on both sides for many years, with the utmost degree of virulence and rage, and time seemed rather to augment than diminish their resentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage should be kept alive is not strange, because he felt every day the consequences of the quarrel; but it might reasonably have been hoped, that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length have forgot those provocations, which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The spirit of Mr. Savage indeed never suffered him to solicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and insult for insult; his superiority of wit supplied the disadvantages of his fortune, and enabled him

him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be some gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his necessities, and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardships, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear misery with fortitude, than enjoy prosperity with moderation.

He now thought himself again at liberty to expose the cruelty of his mother, and therefore, I believe, about this time, published THE BASTARD, a poem remarkable for the vivacious sallies of thought in the beginning*, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of base birth, and the pathetic sentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he suffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and spirit of the verses, the peculiar circumstances of the author, the novelty of the subject, and the notoriety of the story, to which the allusions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately dispersed, and editions were multiplied with unusual rapidity.

One circumstance attended the publication, which Savage used to relate with great satisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was with 'due reverence' inscribed, happened then to be at Bath, where she could not conveniently retire from censure, or conceal herself from observation; and no sooner did the reputation of the poem begin to spread, than she heard it repeated in all places of concourse, nor could she enter the assembly-rooms, or cross the walks without being saluted with some lines from THE BASTARD.

This was perhaps the first time that ever she discovered a sense of shame, and on this occasion the power

* Vol. II. p. 91.

of

of wit was very conſpicuous; the wretch who had, without ſcruple, proclaimed herſelf an adultereſs, and who had firſt endeavoured to ſtarve her ſon, then to tranſport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the repreſentation of her own conduct, but fled from reproach, though ſhe felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmoſt haſte, to ſhelter herſelf among the crouds of London.

Thus Savage had the ſatisfaction of finding, that though he could not reform his mother, he could puniſh her, and that he did not always ſuffer alone.

The pleaſure which he received from this increaſe of his poetical reputation, was ſufficient for ſome time to overbalance the miſeries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate, for it was ſold for a very trivial ſum to a bookſeller, who, though the ſucceſs was ſo uncommon, that five impreſſions were ſold, of which many were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generoſity ſufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The ſale of this poem was always mentioned by Savage with the utmoſt elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an inconteſtable proof of a general acknowledgment of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could juſtly boaſt a general reception.

But though he did not loſe the opportunity which ſucceſs gave him of ſetting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the ſuffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not ſuffer his eſteem of himſelf to depend upon others, nor found any thing ſacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to cenſure him; he then readily ſhewed the folly of expecting that the public ſhould judge right, obſerved how ſlowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himſelf with

with the applauſe of men of judgment, and was ſomewhat diſpoſed to exclude all thoſe from the character of men of judgment, who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind, than to think them blind to the beauties of his works, and imputed the flowneſs of their ſale to other cauſes; either they were publiſhed at a time when the town was empty, or when the attention of the public was engroſſed by ſome ſtruggle in the parliament, or ſome other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publiſher not diligently diſperſed, or by his avarice not advertiſed with ſufficient frequency. Addreſs, or induſtry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any other perſon than the author.

By arts like theſe, arts which every man practiſes in ſome degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be aſcribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himſelf. Had he indeed only made uſe of theſe expedients to alleviate the loſs or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages, which it is not in man's power to beſtow upon himſelf, they might have been juſtly mentioned as inſtances of a philoſophical mind, and very properly propoſed to the imitation of multitudes, who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the ſame dexterity, languiſh under afflictions which might be eaſily removed.

It were doubtleſs to be wiſhed, that truth and reaſon were univerſally prevalent; that every thing were eſteemed according to its real value; and that men would ſecure themſelves from being diſappointed in their endeavours after happineſs, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but if adventitious and foreign pleaſures muſt be purſed, it would be perhaps of ſome benefit, ſince that purſuit muſt

must frequently be fruitless, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleasing intoxication must not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having observed the life of Savage, need to be cautioned against it. By imputing none of his miseries to himself, he continued to act upon the same principles, and to follow the same path; was never made wiser by his sufferings, nor preserved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the same steps on the same circle; always applauding his past conduct, or at least forgetting it, to amuse himself with phantoms of happiness, which were dancing before him; and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reason, when it would have discovered the illusion, and shewn him, what he never wished to see, his real state.

He is even accused, after having lulled his imagination with those ideal opiates, of having tried the same experiment upon his conscience; and having accustomed himself to impute all deviations from the right to foreign causes, it is certain that he was upon every occasion too easily reconciled to himself, and that he appeared very little to regret those practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he mistook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not so much a good man, as the friend of goodness.

This at least must be allowed him, that he always preserved a strong sense of the dignity, the beauty, and the necessity of virtue, and that he never contributed deliberately to spread corruption amongst mankind; his actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his writings being the productions

ductions of ſtudy, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

Theſe writings may improve mankind, when his failings ſhall be forgotten, and therefore he muſt be conſidered upon the whole as a benefactor to the world; nor can his perſonal example do any hurt, ſince whoever hears of his faults, will hear of the miſeries which they brought upon him, and which would deſerve leſs pity, had not his condition been ſuch as made his faults pardonable. He may be conſidered as a child expoſed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when reſolution was not yet ſtrengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumſtance, which in his BASTARD he laments in a very affecting manner.

——No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with pray'r:
No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice reſtrain'd.

THE BASTARD, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compaſſion, ſo that he was ſtill under the ſame want of the neceſſaries of life, and he therefore exerted all the intereſt which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes could procure, to obtain upon the death of Euſden the place of Poet Laureat, and proſecuted his application with ſo much diligence, that the King publickly declared it his intention to beſtow it upon him; but ſuch was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was diſappointed in his ſchemes; for the Lord Chamberlain, who has the diſpoſal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the king's deſign, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an encroachment upon his rights, and therefore beſtowed the laurel upon Colly Cibber.

Mr.

Mr. Savage, thus disappointed, took a resolution of applying to the Queen, that having once given him life, she would enable him to support it, and therefore published a short poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the odd title of VOLUNTEER LAUREAT.* The event of this essay he has himself related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he afterwards reprinted it in THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, from whence I have copied it intire, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage succeeded.

'Mr. URBAN,

'In your Magazine for February you published 'the last VOLUNTEER LAUREAT, written on a very 'melancholy occasion, the death of the royal patro-'ness of arts and literature in general, and of the 'author of that poem in particular: I now send you 'the first that Mr. Savage wrote under that title.— 'This gentleman, notwithstanding a very consider-'able interest, being, on the death of Mr. Eusden, 'disappointed of the Laureat's place, wrote the be-'fore-mentioned poem†; which were no sooner pub-'lished, but the late Queen sent to a bookseller for 'them: the author had not at that time a friend either 'to get him introduced, or his poem presented at 'court; yet such was the unspeakable goodness of that 'Princess, that, notwithstanding this act of ceremony 'was wanting, in a few days after publication, Mr. 'Savage received a Bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a 'gracious message from her Majesty, by the Lord 'North and Guildford, to this effect: "That her "Majesty was highly pleased with the verses; that "she took particularly kind his lines there relating "to the King; that he had permission to write annu-"ally

* Vol. II. p. 220. † Ibid.

" ally on the same subject; and that he should yearly " receive the like present, till something better " (which was her Majesty's intention) could be done " for him." ' After this he was permitted to present ' one of his annual poems to her Majesty, had the ' honour of kissing her hand, and met with the most ' gracious reception. Your's, &c.'

Such was the performance, and such its reception; a reception which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the highest degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyric, shewed in the Queen too much desire of hearing her own praises, and a greater regard to herself than to him on whom her bounty was conferred. It was a kind of avaricious generosity, by which flattery was rather purchased than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the same allowance with much more heroic intention; she had no other view than to enable him to prosecute his studies, and to set himself above the want of assistance, and was contented with doing good without stipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage however was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was ravished with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with those which he was promised; he considered himself now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would establish him in some profitable employment.

He therefore assumed the title of VOLUNTEER LAUREAT, not without some reprehensions from Cibber, who informed him, that the title of LAUREAT was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to bestow upon himself; and added,

that

that he might with equal propriety ſtile himſelf a Voluntcer Lord, or Voluntcer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was juſt; but Savage did not think any title, which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber, ſo honourable as that the uſurpation of it could be imputed to him as an inſtance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the ſame title, and received every year the ſame reward.

He did not appear to conſider theſe encomiums as teſts of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promiſe, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was intitled to his penſion, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for ſome of the laſt years he regularly inſerted them in THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, by which they were diſperſed over the kingdom.

Of ſome of them he had himſelf ſo low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems, for which he printed propoſals, and ſolicited ſubſcriptions; nor can it ſeem ſtrange, that being confined to the ſame ſubject, he ſhould be at ſome times indolent, and at others unſucceſsful; that he ſhould ſometimes delay a diſagreeable taſk, till it was too late to perform it well; or that he ſhould ſometimes repeat the ſame ſentiment on the ſame occaſion, or at others be miſled by an attempt after novelty to forced conceptions, and far-fetched images.

He wrote indeed with a double intention, which ſupplied him with ſome variety; for his buſineſs was to praiſe the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of thoſe which ſhe had promiſed: in ſome of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in ſome diſcontent; in ſome he repreſents himſelf as happy in her patronage, and in others as diſconſolate to find himſelf neglected.

Her promiſe, like other promiſes made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took ſufficient care that it ſhould not be forgotten. The publication of his VOLUNTEER LAUREAT procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not ſo depreſſed by his diſappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his intereſt. When the Princeſs Anne was married, he wrote a poem * upon her departure, only, as he declared, 'becauſe it was expected from him,' and he was not willing to bar his own proſpects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it, and therefore it is likely that it was conſidered at court as an act of duty to which he was obliged by his dependence, and which it was therefore not neceſſary to reward by any new favour: or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it ſuperfluous to laviſh preſents upon a man whom ſhe intended to eſtabliſh for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being fruſtrated, but his penſion likewiſe of being obſtructed by an accidental calumny. The writer of THE DAILY COURANT, a paper then publiſhed under the direction of the miniſtry, charged him with a crime, which though not very great in itſelf, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very juſtly have incenſed the Queen againſt him. He was accuſed by name of influencing elections againſt the court, by appearing at the head of a tory mob; nor did the accuſer fail to aggravate his crime, by repreſenting it as the effect of the moſt atrocious ingratitude, and a kind of a rebellion againſt the Queen, who had firſt preſerved him from an infamous death,

* Vol. II. p. 192.

and

and afterwards distinguished him by her favour, and supported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewise by good fortune very particular. The place of the transaction was mentioned, and the whole series of the rioter's conduct related. This exactness made Mr. Savage's vindication easy; for he never had in his life seen the place which was declared to be the scene of his wickedness, nor ever had been present in any town when its representatives were chosen. This answer he therefore made haste to publish, with all the circumstances necessary to make it credible, and very reasonably demanded, that the accusation should be retracted in the same paper, that he might no longer suffer the imputation of sedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewise pressed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who either trusting to the protection of those whose defence he had undertaken, or having entertained some personal malice against Mr. Savage, or fearing, lest, by retracting so confident an assertion, he should impair the credit of his paper, refused to give him that satisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it necessary, to his own vindication, to prosecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accusation, having sufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge, and therefore willingly dropped it.

He saw soon afterwards a process commenced in the same court against himself, on an information in which he was accused of writing and publishing an obscene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's desire to be distinguished, and when any controversy became popular, he never wanted some reason for engaging in it with

great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had chosen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no sooner taken his side, and informed himself of the chief topics of the dispute, than he took all opportunities of asserting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own interest, or any other visible design than that of drawing upon himself the attention of mankind.

The dispute between the Bishop of London and the Chancellor is well known to have been for some time the chief topic of political conversation, and therefore Mr. Savage, in pursuance of his character, endeavoured to become conspicuous among the controvertists with which every coffee-house was filled on that occasion. He was an indefatigable opposer of all the claims of ecclesiastical power, though he did not know on what they were founded, and was therefore no friend to the Bishop of London. But he had another reason for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle, for he was the friend of Mr. Foster and Mr. Thompson, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his interest in the question, which however, as he imagined, concerned him so nearly, that it was not sufficient to harangue and dispute, but necessary likewise to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new Poem, called by him, THE PROGRESS OF A DIVINE*, in which he conducts a profligate priest by all the gradations of wickedness from a poor curacy in the country, to the highest preferments of the church, and describes with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diversities of human life, his behaviour in every station, and insinuates, that this priest, thus accom-

* Vol. II. p. 111.

plished,

pliſhed, found at laſt a patron in the Biſhop of London.

When he was aſked by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the Biſhop with ſuch an action, he had no more to ſay, than that he had only inverted the accuſation, and that he thought it reaſonable to believe, that he, who obſtructed the riſe of a good man without reaſon, would for bad reaſons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were univerſally provoked by this ſatire, and Savage, who, as was his conſtant practice, had ſet his name to his performance, was cenſured in THE WEEKLY MISCELLANY † with ſeverity, which he did not ſeem inclined to forget.

† A ſhort ſatire was likewiſe publiſhed in the ſame paper, in which were the following lines:

For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death,
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he ſpent his future years
In pray'r, and faſting, and repentant tears.
—But, O vain hope!—the truly Savage cries,
'Prieſts, and their ſlaviſh doctrines, I deſpiſe.
'Shall I———
'Who, by free thinking to free action fir'd,
'In midnight brawls a deathleſs name acquir'd,
'Now ſtoop to learn of eccleſiaſtic men?—
'—No, arm'd with rhime, at prieſts I'll take my aim,
'Though prudence bids me murder but their fame.

WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

An anſwer was publiſhed in THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are ſelected:

Transform'd by thoughtleſs rage, and midnight wine,
From malice free, and puſh'd without deſign;
In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thruſt,
And brought the youth a victim to the duſt;
So ſtrong the hand of accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.

But a return of invective was not thought a sufficient punishment. The Court of King's Bench was therefore moved against him, and he was obliged to return an answer to a charge of obscenity. It was urged in his defence, that obscenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice, but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obscene ideas, with the view of exposing them to detestation, and of amending the age, by shewing the deformity of wickedness. This plea was admitted, and Sir Philip Yorke, who then presided in that court, dismissed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings.

The prosecution, however, answered in some measure the purpose of those by whom it was set on foot; for Mr. Savage was so far intimidated by it, that when the edition of his poem was sold, he did not venture to reprint it; so that it was in a short time

Instead of wasting 'all thy future years,
'Savage, in pray'r and vain repentant tears;'
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the priest, and sink his high-church rage;
To shew what frauds the holy vestments hide,
The nests of av'rice, lust, and pedant pride;
Then change the scene, let merit brightly shine,
And round the patriot twist the wreath divine;
The heav'nly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays transmit a Foster's name.
Touch every passion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.
Thus future times shall royal grace extol;
Thus polish'd lines thy present fame enrol.
——But grant——
——Maliciously that Savage plung'd the steel,
And made the youth its shining vengeance feel;
My soul abhors the act, the man detests,
But more the bigotry in priestly breasts.

GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, May 1735.

forgotten,

forgotten, or forgotten by all but thoſe whom it offended.

It is ſaid, that ſome endeavours were uſed to incenſe the Queen againſt him, but he found advocates to obviate at leaſt part of their effect; for though he was never advanced, he ſtill continued to receive his penſion.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life, and as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to ſecure his memory from reproach, by informing thoſe whom he made his enemies, that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though whenever he thought he had any reaſon to complain of the clergy, he uſed to threaten them with a new edition of THE PROGRESS OF A DIVINE, it was his calm and ſettled reſolution to ſuppreſs it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injuſtice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem, called, THE PROGRESS OF A FREETHINKER, whom he intended to lead through all the ſtages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedneſs, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modiſh ſophiſtry uſed for that purpoſe: and at laſt to diſmiſs him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this deſign is a real loſs to mankind, for he was too well acquainted with all the ſcenes of debauchery to have failed in his repreſentations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have repreſented them in ſuch a manner as ſhould expoſe them either to ridicule or deteſtation.

But this plan was like others, formed and laid aſide, till the vigour of his imagination was ſpent, and the effervescence of invention had ſubſided, but ſoon gave way to ſome other deſign, which pleaſed

by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was still in his usual exigencies, having no certain support but the pension allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact œconomist from want, was very far from being sufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accustomed to dismiss any of his appetites without the gratification which they solicited, and whom nothing but want of money with-held from partaking of every pleasure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his pension was very particular. No sooner had he changed the bill, than he vanished from the sight of all his acquaintances, and lay for some time out of the reach of all the enquiries that friendship or curiosity could make after him; at length he appeared again pennyless as before, but never informed even those whom he seemed to regard most, where he had been, nor was his retreat ever discovered.

This was his constant practice during the whole time that he received the pension from the Queen: He regularly disappeared and returned. He indeed affirmed, that he retired to study, and that the money supported him in solitude for many months; but his friends declared, that the short time in which it was spent sufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeness and his wit still raised him friends, who were desirous of setting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppressed, and therefore solicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with so much earnestness, that they obtained a promise of the next place that should become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a year. This promise was made with an uncommon declara-

tion, ‘ that it was not the promiſe of a miniſter to a ‘ petitioner, but of a friend to his friend.’

Mr. Savage now concluded himſelf ſet at eaſe for ever, and as he obſerves in a poem * written on that incident of his life, truſted and was truſted, but ſoon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promiſe was not inviolable. He ſpent a long time in ſolicitations, and at laſt deſpaired and deſiſted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the miniſter ſome reaſon to believe that he ſhould not ſtrengthen his own intereſt by advancing him, for he had taken care to diſtinguiſh himſelf in coffee-houſes as an advocate for the miniſtry of the laſt years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to juſtify the conduct, and exalt the character of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an epiſtle upon authors, which he wrote about that time, but was too wiſe to publiſh, and of which only ſome fragments ‡ have appeared, inſerted by him in the MAGAZINE after his retirement.

To deſpair was not, however, the character of Savage; when one patronage failed, he had recourſe to another. The prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of ſome writers, whom Mr. Savage did not think ſuperior to himſelf, and therefore he reſolved to addreſs a poem to him.

For this purpoſe he made choice of a ſubject, which could regard only perſons of the higheſt rank and greateſt affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for ſome time to Richmond, that he might proſecute his deſign in full tranquillity, without the temptations of pleaſure, or the ſolicita-

* Vol. II. p. 173. ‡ Ibid. p. 202.

tions

tions of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being disconcerted, he produced a poem ON PUBLIC SPIRIT, WITH REGARD TO PUBLIC WORKS *.

The plan of this poem is very extensive, and comprises a multitude of topics, each of which might furnish matter sufficient for a long performance, and of which some have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own design, and was writing to obtain a supply of wants too pressing to admit of long or accurate enquiries, he passes negligently over many public works, which, even in his own opinion, deserved to be more elaborately treated.

But though he may sometimes disappoint his reader by transient touches upon these subjects, which have often been considered, and therefore naturally raise expectations, he must be allowed amply to compensate his omissions, by expatiating in the conclusion of his work upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more susceptible of embellishments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the passions, than many of those which have hitherto been thought most worthy of the ornaments of verse. The settlement of colonies in uninhabited countries, the establishment of those in security, whose misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleasing or safe, the acquisition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waste and luxuriant bounties of nature, and the enjoyment of those gifts which heaven has scattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be considered without giving rise to a great number of pleasing ideas, and bewildering the imagination in delightful prospects; and, therefore, whatever specula-

* Vol. II. p. 131.

tions

tions they may produce in thoſe who have confined themſelves to political ſtudies, naturally fixed the attention and excited the applauſe of a poet. The politician, when he conſiders men driven into other countries for ſhelter, and obliged to retire to foreſts and deſerts, and paſs their lives and fix their poſterity in the remoteſt corners of the world, to avoid thoſe hardſhips which they ſuffer or fear in their native place, may very properly enquire why the legiſlature does not provide a remedy for theſe miſeries, rather than encourage an eſcape from them. He may conclude, that the flight of every honeſt man is a loſs to the community, that thoſe who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved, and the life, which is overburthened by accidental calamities, ſet at eaſe by the care of the public; and that thoſe, who have by miſconduct forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made uſeful to the ſociety which they have injured, than be driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleaſing undertaking than that of propoſing laws, which, however juſt or expedient, will never be made, or endeavouring to reduce to rational ſchemes of government ſocieties which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private paſſions of thoſe who preſide in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive from want and perſecution, to plenty, quiet, and ſecurity, and ſeats him in ſcenes of peaceful ſolitude, and undiſturbed repoſe.

Savage has not forgotten, amidſt the pleaſing ſentiments which this proſpect of retirement ſuggeſted to him, to cenſure thoſe crimes which have been generally committed by the diſcoverers of new regions, and to expoſe the enormous wickedneſs of making war upon barbarous nations becauſe they cannot reſiſt, and of invading countries becauſe they are fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of viſiting

viſiting diſtant lands only to lay them waſte. He has aſſerted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs that pride which inclines men to imagine that right is the conſequence of power*.

His deſcription of the various miſeries which force men to ſeek for refuge in diſtant countries, affords another inſtance of his proficiency in the important and extenſive ſtudy of human life, and the tenderneſs with which he recounts them, another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is obſervable, that the cloſe of this poem diſcovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and publiſhed in his Miſcellanies, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow proſpects of the middle ſtate of life, and declares his reſolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the ſhrub; but in this poem, though addreſſed to a prince, he mentions this ſtate of life as compriſing thoſe who ought moſt to attract reward, thoſe who merit moſt the confidence of power, and the familiarity of greatneſs, and accidentally mentioning this paſſage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that ſtate.

In deſcribing villas and gardens, he did not omit to condemn that abſurd cuſtom which prevails among the Engliſh of permitting ſervants to receive money from ſtrangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inſerted in his poem theſe lines:

But what the flow'ring pride of gardens rare,
However royal, or however fair,
If gates, which to acceſs ſhould ſtill give way,
Ope but, like Peter's paradiſe, for pay?

* Vol. II. p. 141.

If

If perquiſited varlets frequent ſtand,
And each new walk muſt a new tax demand?
What foreign eye but with contempt ſurveys?
What muſe ſhall from oblivion ſnatch their praiſe?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected, that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmond to be ſhewn for money, and that ſhe ſo openly countenanced the practice, that ſhe had beſtowed the privilege of ſhewing them as a place of profit on a man, whoſe merit ſhe valued herſelf upon rewarding, though ſhe gave him only the liberty of diſgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of theſe lines might be officiouſly repreſented as an inſult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his ſubſiſtence, and that the propriety of his obſervation would be no ſecurity againſt the cenſures which the unſeaſonableneſs of it might draw upon him; he therefore ſuppreſſed the paſſage in the firſt edition, but after the Queen's death thought the ſame caution no longer neceſſary, and reſtored it to the proper place.

The poem was therefore publiſhed without any political faults, and inſcribed to the Prince; but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to preſent it to him, had no other method of attracting his obſervation than the publication of frequent advertiſements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occaſions.

This diſappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by ſome means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his addreſs to him, and inſinuated, that if any advances in popularity could have been made by diſtinguiſhing him, he had not written without notice, or without reward.

He

He was once inclined to have preſented his poem in perſon, and ſent to the printer for a copy with that deſign; but either his opinion changed, or his reſolution deſerted him, and he continued to reſent neglect without attempting to force himſelf into regard.

Nor was the public much more favourable than his patron, for only ſeventy-two were ſold, though the performance was much commended by ſome whoſe judgment in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage eaſily reconciled himſelf to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by obſerving that his poem was unluckily publiſhed two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by conſequence at a time when all thoſe who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their diſmiſſion from public affairs.

It muſt be however allowed, in juſtification of the public, that this performance is not the moſt excellent of Mr. Savage's works, and that though it cannot be denied to contain many ſtriking ſentiments, majeſtic lines, and juſt obſervations, it is in general not ſufficiently poliſhed in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digeſted in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was ſuch as very few could have ſupported with equal patience, but to which it muſt likewiſe be confeſſed, that few would have been expoſed who received punctually fifty pounds a year; a ſalary which though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found ſufficient to ſupport families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the neceſſities of life require.

But no ſooner had he received his penſion, than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a ſhort time to his former diſtreſs, and for ſome

some part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances, from which the meanness of his dress often excluded him, when the politeness and variety of his conversation would have been thought a sufficient recompence for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and passed the night, sometimes in mean houses, which are set open at night to any casual wanderers, sometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble; and sometimes, when he had not money to support even the expences of these receptacles, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down in the summer upon a bulk, or in the winter with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glass-house.

In this manner were passed those days and those nights which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated speculations, useful studies, or pleasing conversation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass-house among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of THE WANDERER, the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations; the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senates, and whose delicacy might have polished courts.

It cannot be imagined that such necessities might sometimes force him upon disreputable practices; and it is probable that these lines in THE WANDERER were occasioned by his reflections on his own conduct.

Tho' mis'ry leads to happiness, and truth,
Unequal to the load, this languid youth,
(O, let

(O, let none cenſure, if, untried by grief,
If, amidſt woe, untempted by relief,)
He ſtoop'd reluctant to low arts of ſhame,
Which then, e'en then he ſcorn'd, and bluſh'd to name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be ſolicited for ſmall ſums, which the frequency of the requeſt made in time conſiderable, and he was therefore quickly ſhunned by thoſe who were become familiar enough to be truſted with his neceſſities; but his rambling manner of life, and conſtant appearance at houſes of public reſort, always procured him a new ſucceſſion of friends, whoſe kindneſs had not been exhauſted by repeated requeſts, ſo that he was ſeldom abſolutely without reſources, but had in his utmoſt exigences this comfort, that he always imagined himſelf ſure of ſpeedy relief.

It was obſerved that he always aſked favours of this kind without the leaſt ſubmiſſion or apparent conſciouſneſs of dependence, and that he did not ſeem to look upon a compliance with his requeſt as an obligation that deſerved any extraordinary acknowledgments, but a refuſal was reſented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor did he readily reconcile himſelf to thoſe who either denied to lend, or gave him afterwards any intimation, that they expected to be repaid.

He was ſometimes ſo far compaſſionated by thoſe who knew both his merit and diſtreſſes, that they received him into their families, but they ſoon diſcovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for being always accuſtomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himſelf to any ſtated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his converſation till midnight, without conſidering that buſineſs might require his friend's application

cation in the morning; and when he had perſuaded himſelf to retire to bed, was not, without equal difficulty, called up to dinner; it was therefore impoſſible to pay him any diſtinction without the entire ſubverſion of all œconomy, a kind of eſtabliſhment which, wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It muſt therefore be acknowledged, in juſtification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldneſs of his friends that Savage was diſtreſſed, but becauſe it was in reality very difficult to preſerve him long in a ſtate of eaſe. To ſupply him with money was a hopeleſs attempt, for no ſooner did he ſee himſelf maſter of a ſum ſufficient to ſet him free from care for a day, than he became profuſe and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a ſcheme of pleaſure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to ſome new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amuſements and jollity; wherever Savage entered he immediately expected that order and buſineſs ſhould fly before him, that all ſhould thenceforward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domeſtic management ſhould be oppoſed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His diſtreſſes, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his loweſt ſtate he wanted not ſpirit to aſſert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repreſs that inſolence which ſuperiority of fortune incited, and to trample that reputation which roſe upon any other baſis than that of merit: he never admitted any groſs familiarities, or ſubmitted to be treated otherwiſe than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or cloaths, one of his friends, a man not indeed remarkable for moderation

in his prosperity, left a message, that he desired to see him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to assist him, but was very much disgusted that he should presume to prescribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refused to visit him, and rejected his kindness.

The same invincible temper, whether firmness or obstinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded that the allowance which was once paid him should be restored, but with whom he never appeared to entertain for a moment the thought of soliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtiness of superiority, and all the bitterness of resentment. He wrote to him not in a style of supplication or respect, but of reproach, menace and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conquest.

As many more can discover, that a man is richer than that he is wiser than themselves, superiority of understanding is not so readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is that haughtiness, which the consciousness of great abilities incites, borne with the same submission as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by asserting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating those with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel against him, did not fail to raise a great number of enemies in the different classes of mankind. Those who thought themselves raised above him by the advantages of riches, hated him because they found no protection from the petulance of his wit. Those who were esteemed for their writings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival, and almost all the smaller wits were his professed enemies.

Among

Among theſe Mr. Millar ſo far indulged his reſentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be perſonated on the ſtage in a dreſs like that which he then wore; a mean inſult, which only inſinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore deſpiſed by him rather than reſented; for though he wrote a lampoon againſt Millar, he never printed it: and as no other perſon ought to proſecute that revenge from which the perſon who was injured deſiſted, I ſhall not preſerve what Mr. Savage ſuppreſſed; of which the publication would indeed have been a puniſhment too ſevere for ſo impotent an aſſault.

The great hardſhips of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained that as his affairs grew deſperate, he found his reputation for capacity viſibly decline; that his opinion in queſtions of criticiſm was no longer regarded, when his coat was out of faſhion; and that thoſe who in the interval of his proſperity were always encouraging him to great undertakings by encomiums on his genius and aſſurances of ſucceſs, now received any mention of his deſigns with coldneſs, thought that the ſubjects on which he propoſed to write were very difficult; and were ready to inform him, that the event of a poem was uncertain, that an author ought to employ much time in the conſideration of his plan, and not preſume to ſit down to write in confidence of a few curſory ideas, and a ſuperficial knowledge; difficulties were ſtarted on all ſides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but THE VOLUNTEER LAUREAT.

Yet even this kind of contempt never depreſſed him; for he always preſerved a ſteady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he ſhould at any time earneſtly endeavour

to attain. He formed ſchemes of the ſame kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himſelf with advances to be made in ſcience, as with riches to be enjoyed in ſome diſtant period of his life. For the acquiſition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches; for he was naturally inquiſitive and deſirous of the converſation of thoſe from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means ſolicitous to improve thoſe opportunities that were ſometimes offered of raiſing his fortune; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which, when once he was in poſſeſſion of them, rarely forſook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would ſome time recollect her promiſe, he had recourſe to the uſual practice of writers, and publiſhed propoſals for printing his works by ſubſcription, to which he was encouraged by the ſucceſs of many who had not a better right to the favour of the public; but whatever was the reaſon he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him, and he obſerved with ſome diſcontent, that though he offered his works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a ſmall number in compariſon with thoſe who ſubſcribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he ſaw his propoſals neglected by the Queen, who patroniſed Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among thoſe who attended the court, who ſhould moſt promote his intereſt, and who ſhould firſt offer a ſubſcription. This was a diſtinction to which Mr. Savage made no ſcruple of aſſerting that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius gave him a fairer title than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's

Savage's applications were however not univerſally unſucceſsful; for ſome of the nobility countenanced his deſign, encouraged his propoſals, and ſubſcribed with great liberality. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that, upon receiving his propoſals, he ſent him ten guineas.

But the money which his ſubſcriptions afforded him was not leſs volatile than that which he received from his other ſchemes; whenever a ſubſcription was paid him he went to a tavern, and as money ſo collected is neceſſarily received in ſmall ſums, he never was able to ſend his poems to the preſs, but for many years continued his ſolicitation, and ſquandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his works was frequently revived, and as his propoſals grew obſolete, new ones were printed with freſher dates. To form ſchemes for the publication was one of his favourite amuſements, nor was he ever more at eaſe than when with any friend who readily fell in with his ſchemes, he was adjuſting the print, forming the advertiſements, and regulating the diſperſion of his new edition, which he really intended ſome time to publiſh, and which, as long as experience had ſhewn him the impoſſibility of printing the volume together, he at laſt determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the firſt might ſupply the expences of the next.

Thus he ſpent his time in mean expedients and tormenting ſuſpenſe, living for the greateſt part in fear of proſecutions from his creditors, and conſequently ſkulking in obſcure parts of the town, of which he was no ſtranger to the remoteſt corners. But wherever he came his addreſs ſecured him friends, whom his neceſſities ſoon alienated, ſo that he had perhaps a more numerous acquaintance than any man

ever before attained, there being scarcely any person eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whose character he was not in some degree able to delineate.

To the acquisition of this extensive acquaintance every circumstance of his life contributed. He excelled in the arts of conversation, and therefore willingly practised them: He had seldom any home, or even a lodging in which he could be private, and therefore was driven into public-houses for the common conveniences of life, and supports of nature. He was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to with-hold him, and often no money to provide for himself; and by dining with one company, he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus dissipated was his life, and thus casual his subsistence; yet did not the distraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition depress his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he sometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in study, or amuse it with pleasing imaginations; and seldom appeared to be melancholy, but when some sudden misfortune had just fallen upon him, and even then in a few moments he would disentangle himself from his perplexity, adopt the subject of conversation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others presented to it.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered in 1738, with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the prospects of preferment with which he so long entertained his imagination; and as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reason to believe that he never intended

intended the performance of his promiſe, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was however, at that time, ſupported by a friend; and as it was not his cuſtom to look out for diſtant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itſelf upon his ſenſes, he was not much afflicted at his loſs, and perhaps comforted himſelf that his penſion would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyric.

Another expectation contributed likewiſe to ſupport him: he had taken a reſolution to write a ſecond tragedy upon the ſtory of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preſerved a few lines of his former play; but made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; ſo that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another ſubject; but in vindication of himſelf, he aſſerted, that it was not eaſy to find a better; and that he thought it his intereſt to extinguiſh the memory of the firſt tragedy, which he could only do by writing one leſs defective upon the ſame ſtory; by which he ſhould entirely defeat the artifice of the booksellers, who after the death of any author of reputation, are always induſtrious to ſwell his works, by uniting his worſt productions with his beſt.

In the execution of this ſcheme however, he proceeded but ſlowly, and probably only employed himſelf upon it when he could find no other amuſement; but he pleaſed himſelf with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined, that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire, would be equivalent to all that he had loſt by the death of his patroneſs.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the meaſures proper to ſecure the continuance of his penſion, though ſome of his fa-

mourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year, he gave a proof of the solidity of his judgment, and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been so long beaten, that it was impossible to travel in it without treading in the footsteps of those who had gone before him; and that therefore it was necessary, that he might distinguish himself from the herd of encomiasts, to find out some new walk of funeral panegyric.

This difficult task he performed in such a manner, that his poem may be justly ranked among the best pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view; but which he has united in such a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be justly said, that what no other man would have thought on, it now appears scarcely possible for any man to miss.*

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is so masterly, that it is sufficient to set this poem above censure; and therefore it is not necessary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deservedly be admired in any other performance.

To these proofs of his genius may be added, from the same poem, an instance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not so often distinguished; he does not forget † to remind the King in the most delicate and artful manner of continuing his pension.

With regard to the success of this address, he was for some time in suspense; but was in no great de-

* Vol. II. p. 227. † Vol. II. p. 129.

gree

gree solicitous about it; and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend, who had for a considerable time supported him, removing his family to another place, took occasion to dismiss him. It then became necessary to enquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reason to suspect that no great favour was intended him, because he had not received his pension at the usual time.

It is said, that he did not take those methods of retrieving his interest, which were most likely to succeed; and some of those who were employed in the Exchequer, cautioned him against too much violence in his proceedings; but Mr. Savage, who seldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his passion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reason of the distinction that was made between him and the other pensioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughness, which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accused or suspected, and whatever influence was employed against him, he received soon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his pension; and he had now no prospect of subsistence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finish it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an estate and title by a particular law, exposed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themselves into esteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever prospects arose, were always

intercepted as he began to approach them. The King's intentions in his favour were fruſtrated; his Dedication * to the Prince, whoſe generoſity on every other occaſion was eminent, procured him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himſelf upon keeping his promiſe to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore not only with decency, but with chearfulneſs, nor was his gaiety clouded even by his laſt diſappointments, though he was in a ſhort time reduced to the loweſt degree of diſtreſs; and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another inſtance of the inſurmountable obſtinacy of his ſpirit; his cloaths were worn out, and he received notice, that at a coffee-houſe ſome cloaths and linen were left for him; the perſon who ſent them, did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might ſpare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was ſo far generous, it was made with ſome neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage ſo much reſented, that he refuſed the preſent, and declined to enter the houſe, till the cloaths that had been deſigned for him were taken away.

His diſtreſs was now publickly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert ſome meaſures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expreſſed his concern 'for 'the miſerable withdrawing of his penſion;' and gave him hopes, that in a ſhort time he ſhould find himſelf ſupplied with a competence, 'without any 'dependance on thoſe little creatures which we are 'pleaſed to call the Great.'

* Vol. II. p. 229.

The

The ſcheme propoſed for this happy and independent ſubſiſtence, was, that he ſhould retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raiſed by a ſubſcription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aſpiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from thoſe of his friends; for they propoſed that he ſhould continue an exile from London for ever, and ſpend all the remaining part of his life at Swanſea; but he deſigned only to take the opportunity, which their ſcheme offered him, of retreating for a ſhort time, that he might prepare his play for the ſtage, and his other works for the preſs, and then to return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his works, he propoſed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application; and when he had finiſhed them, he deſigned to do juſtice to his ſubſcribers, by publiſhing them according to his propoſals.

As he was ready to entertain himſelf with future pleaſures, he had planned out a ſcheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from paſtorals and ſongs. He imagined that he ſhould be tranſported to ſcenes of flowery felicity, like thoſe which one poet has reflected to another, and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleaſures of which he ſuſpected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With theſe expectations he was ſo enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for ſubmitting to live upon a ſubſcription, and adviſed rather by a reſolute exertion of his abilities to ſup-

port

port himself, he could not bear to debar himself from the happiness which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lose the opportunity of listening, without intermission, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happiness of a country life.

While this scheme was ripening, his friends directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be secure from his creditors, and sent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly spent before the next morning, and trusted, after his usual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of fortune.

He now began very sensibly to feel the miseries of dependance: Those by whom he was to be supported, began to prescribe to him with an air of authority, which he knew not how decently to resent, nor patiently to bear; and he soon discovered from the conduct of most of his subscribers, that he was yet in the hands of 'Little creatures.'

Of the insolence that he was obliged to suffer, he gave many instances, of which none appeared to raise his indignation to a greater height, than the method which was taken of furnishing him with cloaths. Instead of consulting him, and allowing him to send a tailor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they proposed to send for a tailor to take his measure, and then to consult how they should equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it such as Savage's humanity would have suggested to him on a like occasion; but it had scarcely deserved mention, had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, shewn the peculiarity of his character.

Upon

Upon hearing the design that was formed, he came to the lodging of a friend with the most violent agonies of rage; and being asked what it could be that gave him such disturbance, he replied with the utmost vehemence of indignation, 'That they had 'sent for a tailor to measure him.'

How the affair ended was never enquired, for fear of renewing his uneasiness. It is probable, that, upon recollection, he submitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid, and that he discovered no resentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and universal compliance; for when the gentleman, who had first informed him of the design to support him by a subscription, attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the measures that were proposed.

A letter was written for him * to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpose his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he solicited Sir William's assistance, 'for a man who really 'needed it as much as any man could well do;' and informed him, that he was retiring 'for ever to 'a place where he should no more trouble his rela-'tions, friends, or enemies;' he confessed, that his passion had betrayed him to some conduct with regard to Lord Tyrconnel, 'for which he could not but 'heartily ask his pardon;' and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's passion might be yet so high, that he would not 'receive a letter from him,' begged that Sir William would endeavour to soften him; and expressed his hopes that he would comply with his request, and that 'so small a relation would not 'harden his heart against him.'

* By Mr. Pope.

That

That any man should presume to dictate a letter to him, was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage; and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it. But when he read it, he found it contained sentiments entirely opposite to his own; and, as he asserted, to the truth; and therefore instead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of masculine resentment and warm expostulations. He very justly observed, that the style was too supplicatory, and the representation too abject, and that he ought at least to have made him complain with 'the dignity of a gentleman in distress.' He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to ask Lord Tyrconnel's pardon; for 'he despised his pardon, and therefore could not 'heartily, and would not hypocritically, ask it.' He remarked, that his friend made a very unreasonable distinction between himself and him; for, says he, when you mention men of high rank 'in your own 'character,' they are 'those little creatures whom 'we are pleased to call the great;' but when you address them 'in mine,' no servility is sufficiently humble. He then with great propriety explained the ill consequences which might be expected from such a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full answer to all that he should allege against them; for he always intended to publish a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reasons, and agreed that it ought to be suppressed.

After many alterations and delays, a subscription was at length raised which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman;

tleman; such was the generosity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without solicitation, could not now be effected by application and interest; and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a pension less than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any servilities.

Mr. Savage however was satisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid economist, and to live according to the exactest rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man, who, when he knew his income, exceeded it; and yet he confessed, that instances of such folly were too common, and lamented that some men were not to be trusted with their own money.

Full of these salutary resolutions, he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderness of his friends, and parted from the Author of this Narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furnished with fifteen guineas, and informed, that they would be sufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his support in Wales for some time; and that there remained but little more of the first collection. He promised a strict adherence to his maxims of parsimony, and went away in the stage-coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him, till he informed them of his arrival at Swansea.

But when they least expected, arrived a letter dated the fourteenth day after his departure, in which he sent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then sent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Bristol, from whence he was to go to Swansea by water.

At

At Briſtol he found an embargo laid upon the ſhipping, ſo that he could not immediately obtain a paſſage; and being therefore obliged to ſtay there ſome time, he, with his uſual felicity, ingratiated himſelf with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houſes, diſtinguiſhed at their public feaſts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore eaſily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them ſo much by his letters, that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed, that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a year, which were allowed him by the gentleman who propoſed the ſubſcription.

After ſome ſtay at Briſtol he retired to Swanſea, the place originally propoſed for his reſidence, where he lived about a year very much diſſatisfied with the diminution of his ſalary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with thoſe who were moſt diſtinguiſhed in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel * and Mrs. Jones †, by ſome verſes which he inſerted in THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London, and was deſirous of coming to town to bring it upon the ſtage. This deſign was very warmly oppoſed, and he was adviſed by his chief benefactor to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomſon and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the ſtage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual penſion ſhould be paid him.

* Vol. II. p. 217. † Ibid. p. 197.

This

This propoſal he rejected with the utmoſt contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of thoſe to whom he was required to ſubmit, was ſuperior to his own. He was now determined, as he expreſſed it, to be 'no longer kept in 'leading ſtrings,' and had no elevated idea of 'his 'bounty,' who propoſed to 'penſion him out of the 'profits of his own labour.'

He attempted in Wales to promote a ſubſcription for his works, and had once hopes of ſucceſs; but in a ſhort time afterwards formed a reſolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reaſonable to be confined for the gratification of thoſe, who, having promiſed him a liberal income, had no ſooner baniſhed him to a remote corner, than they reduced his allowance to a ſalary ſcarcely equal to the neceſſities of life.

His reſentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at leaſt, he had not deſerved, was ſuch, that he broke off all correſpondence with moſt of his contributors, and appeared to conſider them as perſecutors and oppreſſors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct toward him, ſince his departure from London, 'had been perfidiouſ-'neſs improving on perfidiouſneſs, and inhumanity 'on inhumanity.'

It is not to be ſuppoſed, that the neceſſities of Mr. Savage did not ſometimes incite him to ſatirical exaggerations of the behaviour of thoſe by whom he thought himſelf reduced to them. But it muſt be granted, that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardſhip, and that thoſe who withdrew their ſubſcription from a man, who, upon the faith of their promiſe, had gone into a kind of baniſhment, and abandoned all thoſe by whom he had been be-

fore relieved in his diſtreſſes, will find it no eaſy taſk to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alleged, and perhaps juſtly, that he was petulant and contemptuous, that he more frequently reproached his ſubſcribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered, that this conduct, and this is the worſt charge that can be drawn up againſt him, did them no real injury; and that it therefore ought rather to have been pitied than reſented, at leaſt the reſentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deſerve that ſtarves the man whom he has perſuaded to put himſelf into his power.

It might have been reaſonably demanded by Savage, that they ſhould, before they had taken away what they promiſed, have replaced him in his former ſtate, that they ſhould have taken no advantages from the ſituation to which the appearance of their kindneſs had reduced him, and that he ſhould have been recalled to London before he was abandoned. He might juſtly repreſent, that he ought to have been conſidered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be releaſed before the dogs ſhould be looſed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to releaſe himſelf, and with an intent to return to London, went to Briſtol, where a repetition of the kindneſs which he had formerly found, invited him to ſtay. He was not only careſſed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not ſuffer him to conſider, that ſuch proofs of kindneſs were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably,

bably, be every day leſs; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generoſity was exhauſted, and officiouſneſs wearied.

Another part of his miſconduct was the practice of prolonging his viſits to unſeaſonable hours, and diſconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce which all the charms of his converſation could not compenſate; for what trader would purchaſe ſuch airy ſatisfaction by the loſs of ſolid gain, which muſt be the conſequence of midnight merriment, as thoſe hours which were gained at night were generally loſt in the morning?

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curioſity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreaſing, perhaps without ſuſpecting for what reaſon their conduct was altered; for he ſtill continued to haraſs, with his nocturnal intruſions, thoſe that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houſes.

But he did not ſpend all the time of his reſidence at Briſtol in viſits or at taverns, for he ſometimes returned to his ſtudies, and began ſeveral conſiderable deſigns. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obſcure part of the ſuburbs, till he found himſelf again deſirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of abſence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his deſign of returning to London to bring his tragedy upon the ſtage; but having neglected to depart with the money that was raiſed for him, he could not afterwards procure a ſum ſufficient to defray the expences of his journey; nor perhaps would a freſh ſupply have had any other

effect, than, by putting immediate pleasures in his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus spending the day in contriving a scheme for the morrow, distress stole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied some of those who were at first enamoured of his conversation; but he might perhaps, still have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal success, had not the decay of his cloaths made it no longer consistent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to associate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home at whose house he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the necessaries of life, but wandered about the town slighted and neglected in quest of a dinner which he did not always obtain.

To complete his misery he was pursued by the officers for small debts which he had contracted; and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the small number of friends from whom he had still reason to hope for favours. His custom was to lie in bed the greatest part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmost privacy, and after having paid his visit return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obscure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he suffered the utmost extremities of poverty, and often fasted so long that he was seized with faintness, and had lost his appetite, not being able to bear the smell of meat, till the action of his stomach was restored by a cordial.

In this distress he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himself a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily spent his money at a favourite tavern.

Thus was he again confined to Briſtol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who ſheltered him in his houſe, though at the uſual inconveniences with which his company was attended; for he could neither be perſuaded to go to bed in the night, nor to riſe in the day.

It is obſervable, that in theſe various ſcenes of miſery, he was always diſengaged and cheerful: he at ſome times purſued his ſtudies, and at others continued or enlarged his epiſtolary correſpondence, nor was he ever ſo far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increaſe of his allowance by any other methods than accuſations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of aſſiſtance from his friends at Briſtol, who as merchants, and by conſequence ſufficiently ſtudious of profit, cannot be ſuppoſed to have looked with much compaſſion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of ſuch conſequence as neglect of economy. It is natural to imagine, that many of thoſe who would have relieved his real wants, were diſcouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by obſervation of the uſe which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and that the ſame neceſſity would quickly return.

At laſt he quitted the houſe of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, ſtill intending to ſet out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at ſupper with two of his friends, he was at his return to his lodgings arreſted for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-houſe, and conducted to the houſe of a ſheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen

with whom he had ſupped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

'It was not a little unfortunate for me, that I ſpent 'yeſterday's evening with you; becauſe the hour 'hindered me from entering on my new lodging; 'however, I have now got one, but ſuch an one, as 'I believe nobody would chuſe.

'I was arreſted at the ſuit of Mrs. Read, juſt as I 'was going up ſtairs to bed, at Mr. Bowyer's; but 'taken in ſo private a manner, that I believe nobody 'at the White Lion is appriſed of it. Though I let 'the officers know the ſtrength (or rather weakneſs) 'of my pocket, yet they treated me with the utmoſt 'civility, and even when they conducted me to con-'finement, it was in ſuch a manner, that I verily 'believe I could have eſcaped, which I would rather 'be ruined than have done, notwithſtanding the 'whole amount of my finances was but three pence 'halfpenny.

'In the firſt place I muſt inſiſt, that you will in-'duſtriouſly conceal this from Mrs. S——s, becauſe 'I would not have her goodnature ſuffer that pain, 'which, I know, ſhe would be apt to feel on this 'occaſion.

'Next, I conjure you, dear Sir, by all the ties of 'friendſhip, by no means to have one uneaſy thought 'on my account; but to have the ſame pleaſantry 'of countenance and unruffled ſerenity of mind, 'which (God be praiſed!) I have in this, and have 'had in a much ſeverer calamity. Furthermore, I 'charge you, if you value my friendſhip as truly as 'I do yours, not to utter or even harbour the leaſt 'reſentment againſt Mrs. Read. I believe ſhe has 'ruined me, but I freely forgive her; and (though 'I will never more have any intimacy with her) 'would, at a due diſtance, rather do her an act of

'good,

'good, than ill will. Laſtly (pardon the expreſſion), 'I abſolutely command you not to offer me any pe-'cuniary aſſiſtance, nor to attempt getting me any 'from any one of your friends. At another time, 'or on any other occaſion, you may, dear friend, be 'well aſſured, I would rather write to you in the 'ſubmiſſive ſtyle of a requeſt, than that of a peremp-'tory command.

'However, that my truly valuable friend may not 'think I am too proud to aſk a favour, let me en-'treat you to let me have your boy to attend me for 'this day, not only for the ſake of ſaving me the 'expence of porters, but for the delivery of ſome 'letters to people whoſe names I would not have 'known to ſtrangers.

'The civil treatment I have thus far met from 'thoſe, whoſe priſoner I am, makes me thankful to 'the Almighty, that, though he has thought fit to 'viſit me (on my birth-night) with affliction, yet '(ſuch is his great goodneſs!) my affliction is not 'without alleviating circumſtances. I murmur not, 'but am all reſignation to the divine will. As to 'the world, I hope that I ſhall be endued by heaven 'with that preſence of mind, that ſerene dignity 'in misfortune, that conſtitutes the character of a 'true nobleman; a dignity far beyond that of coro-'nets; a nobility ariſing from the juſt principles of 'philoſophy, refined and exalted by thoſe of chriſti-'anity.'———

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he ſhould be able to procure bail, and avoid the neceſſity of going to priſon. The ſtate in which he paſſed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very juſtly expreſſed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend: 'The whole day,' ſays he, 'has 'been employed in various peoples' filling my head

'with their fooliſh chimerical ſyſtems, which has 'obliged me coolly (as far as nature will admit) to 'digeſt, and accommodate myſelf to, every different 'perſon's way of thinking; hurried from one wild 'ſyſtem to another, till it has quite made a chaos of 'my imagination, and nothing done—promiſed—'diſappointed—ordered to ſend every hour, from one 'part of the town to the other.'——

When his friends, who had hitherto careſſed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the ſame, they all refuſed to preſerve him from a priſon, at the expence of eight pounds; and therefore after having been for ſome time at the officer's houſe, 'at an immenſe expence,' as he obſerves in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expence he was enabled to ſupport by the generoſity of Mr. Naſh at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately ſent him five guineas, and promiſed to promote his ſubſcription at Bath with all his intereſt.

By his removal to Newgate, he obtained at leaſt a freedom from ſuſpenſe, and reſt from the diſturbing viciſſitudes of hope and diſappointment; he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to ſhare his gaiety, but not to partake of his misfortunes; and therefore he no longer expected any aſſiſtance from them.

It muſt however be obſerved of one gentleman, that he offered to releaſe him by paying the debt, but that Mr. Savage would not conſent, I ſuppoſe, becauſe he thought he had been before too burthenſome to him.

He was offered by ſome of his friends, that a collection ſhould be made for his enlargement, but he 'treated the propoſal,' and declared, * 'that he

* In a letter after his confinement.

'ſhould

' ſhould again treat it, with diſdain. As to writing ' any mendicant letters, he had too high a ſpirit, ' and determined only to write to ſome miniſters of ' ſtate, to try to regain his penſion.'

He continued to complain * of thoſe that had ſent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had ' loſt the profits of his play which had been ' finiſhed three years;' and in another letter declares his reſolution to publiſh a pamphlet, that the world might know how ' he had been uſed.'

This pamphlet was never written, for he in a very ſhort time recovered his uſual tranquillity, and cheerfully applied himſelf to more inoffenſive ſtudies. He indeed ſteadily declared, that he was promiſed a yearly allowance of fifty pounds, and never received half the ſum; but he ſeemed to reſign himſelf to that as well as to other misfortunes, and loſe the remembrance of it in his amuſements and employments.

The cheerfulneſs with which he bore his confinement, appears from the following letter which he wrote, January the 30th, to one of his friends in London:

' I now write to you from my confinement in New-' gate, where I have been ever ſince Monday laſt was ' ſe'en-night, and where I enjoy myſelf with much ' more tranquillity than I have known for upwards ' of a twelvemonth paſt; having a room entirely to ' myſelf, and purſuing the amuſement of my poeti-' cal ſtudies, uninterrupted and agreeable to my ' mind. I thank the Almighty, I am now all col-' lected in myſelf, and though my perſon is in con-' finement, my mind can expatiate on ample and ' uſeful ſubjects with all the freedom imaginable. I ' am now more converſant with the Nine than ever; ' and if, inſtead of a Newgate-bird, I may be al-

* Letter January 15.

' lowed

'lowed to be a bird of the Muſes, I aſſure you, Sir, 'I ſing very freely in my cage; ſometimes indeed in 'the plaintive notes of the nightingale; but, at 'others, in the cheerful ſtrains of the lark.'—

In another letter he obſerves, that he ranges from one ſubject to another, without confining himſelf to any particular taſk, and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deſerves, at leaſt, to be mentioned with applauſe; and whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of ſuffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, conſtituted a wiſe man, are thoſe of bearing and forbearing, which cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally poſſeſſed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practiſe the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the priſon, with great humanity; was ſupported by him at his own table without any certainty of recompenſe, had a room to himſelf, to which he could at any time retire from all diſturbance, was allowed to ſtand at the door of the priſon, and ſometimes taken out into the fields, ſo that he ſuffered fewer hardſhips in priſon, than he had been accuſtomed to undergo in the greateſt part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made ſome overtures to the creditor for his releaſe, but without effect; and continued, during the whole time of his impriſonment, to treat him with the utmoſt tenderneſs and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly moſt laudable in that ſtate which makes it moſt difficult: and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deſerves this public atteſtation; and the man, whoſe heart has not been hardened

hardened by such an employment, may be justly proposed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inscription was once engraved to the 'honest toll-gatherer,' less honours ought not to be paid 'to the tender 'gaoler.'

Mr. Savage very frequently received visits, and sometimes presents from his acquaintances, but they did not amount to a subsistence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generosity of this keeper; but these favours, however they might endear to him the particular persons from whom he received them, were very far from impressing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Bristol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himself in prison, than in writing a poem called 'London and Bristol * delineated.'

When he had brought this poem to its present state, which, without considering the chasm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his design, and informed his friend, that he was determined to print it with his name; but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Bristol acquaintance. The gentleman, surprised at his resolution, endeavoured to dissuade him from publishing it, at least from prefixing his name, and declared, that he could not reconcile the injunction of secrecy with his resolution to own it at its first appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an answer agreeable to his character in the following terms:

'I received yours this morning, and not without 'a little surprize at the contents. To answer a 'question with a question, you ask me concerning 'London and Bristol, Why will I add delineated? 'Why did Mr. Woolaston add the same word to his 'RELIGION OF NATURE? I suppose that it was his

* Vol. II. p. 231.

'will

'will and pleaſure to add it in his caſe; and it is 'mine to do ſo in my own. You are pleaſed to tell 'me, that you underſtand not why ſecrecy is en- 'joined, and yet I intend to ſet my name to it. My 'anſwer is—I have my private reaſons, which I am 'not obliged to explain to any one. You doubt my 'friend Mr. S—— would not approve of it—And 'what is it to me whether he does or not? Do you 'imagine that Mr. S—— is to dictate to me? If any 'man, who calls himſelf my friend, ſhould aſſume 'ſuch an air, I would ſpurn at his friendſhip with 'contempt. You ſay I ſeem to think ſo by not let- 'ting him know it—And ſuppoſe I do, what then? 'Perhaps I can give reaſons for that diſapprobation, 'very foreign from what you would imagine. You 'go on in ſaying, Suppoſe I ſhould not put my name 'to it—My anſwer is, that I will not ſuppoſe any 'ſuch thing, being determined to the contrary; 'neither, Sir, would I have you ſuppoſe, that I ap- 'plied to you for want of another preſs: Nor would 'I have you imagine, that I owe Mr. S—— obligations 'which I do not.'

Such was his imprudence, and ſuch his obſtinate adherence to his own reſolutions, however abſurd. A priſoner! ſupported by charity! and, whatever inſults he might have received during the latter part of his ſtay in Briſtol, once careſſed, eſteemed, and preſented with a liberal collection, he could forget on a ſudden his danger and his obligations, to gratify the petulance of his wit, or the eagerneſs of his reſent- ment, and publiſhed a ſatire, by which he might rea- ſonably expect, that he ſhould alienate thoſe who then ſupported him, and provoke thoſe whom he could neither reſiſt nor eſcape.

This reſolution, from the execution of which, it is probable, that only his death could have hindered him,

him, is sufficient to shew, how much he disregarded all considerations that opposed his present passions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it, nor had opposition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was however laid aside, while he was employed in soliciting assistance from several great persons, and one interruption succeeding another, hindered him from supplying the chasm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finished, in his own opinion; for it is very unequal, and some of the lines are rather inserted to rhyme to others, than to support or improve the sense; but the first and last parts are worked up with great spirit and elegance.

His time was spent in the prison for the most part in study, or in receiving visits; but sometimes he descended to lower amusements, and diverted himself in the kitchen with the conversation of the criminals; for it was not pleasing to him to be much without company, and though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the first that offered: for this he was sometimes reproved by his friends, who found him surrounded with felons; but the reproof was on that, as on other occasions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himself, and to set very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other scene of his life, he made use of such opportunities as occurred of benefiting those who were more miserable than himself, and was always ready to perform any offices of humanity to his fellow-prisoners.

He

He had now ceaſed from correſponding with any of his ſubſcribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a year which he had promiſed him, and by whom it was expected, that he would have been in a very ſhort time enlarged, becauſe he had directed the keeper to enquire after the ſtate of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court, that the creditor might be obliged to make him ſome allowance, if he was continued a priſoner, and when on that occaſion he appeared in the hall was treated with very unuſual reſpect.

But the reſentment of the city was afterwards raiſed by ſome accounts that had been ſpread of the ſatire, and he was informed that ſome of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a priſoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace, and perhaps might have haſtened the publication, only to ſhew how much he was ſuperior to their inſults, had not all his ſchemes been ſuddenly deſtroyed.

When he had been ſix months in priſon, he received from one of his friends *, in whoſe kindneſs he had the greateſt confidence, and on whoſe aſſiſtance he chiefly depended, a letter, that contained a charge of very attrocious ingratitude, drawn up in ſuch terms as ſudden reſentment dictated. Mr. Savage returned a very ſolemn proteſtation of his innocence, but however appeared much diſturbed at the accuſation. Some days afterwards he was ſeized with a pain in his back and ſide, which, as it was not violent, was not ſuſpected to be dangerous; but growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himſelf to his room, and a fever ſeized his ſpirits.

* Mr. Pope.

The

The ſymptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any aſſiſtance. The laſt time that the keeper ſaw him was on July the 31ſt *, when Savage, ſeeing him at his bedſide, ſaid, with an uncommon earneſtneſs, 'I have 'ſomething to ſay to you, Sir;' but, after a pauſe, moved his hand in a melancholy manner, and finding himſelf unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, ſaid, 'Tis gone!' The keeper ſoon after left him, and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally diſtinguiſhed by his virtues and vices, and at once remarkable for his weakneſſes and abilities.

He was of a middle ſtature, of a thin habit of body, a long viſage, coarſe featurrs, and melancholy aſpect; of a grave and manly deportment, a ſolemn dignity of mien; but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, ſoftened into an engaging eaſineſs of manners. His walk was ſlow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was eaſily excited to ſmiles, but very ſeldom provoked to laughter.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgment was accurate, his apprehenſion quick, and his memory ſo tenacious, that he was frequently obſerved to know what he had learned from others in a ſhort time, better than thoſe by whom he was informed, and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumſtances, which few would have regarded at the preſent time, but which the quickneſs of his apprehenſion impreſſed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity, that his attention never deſerted him; he

* In 1743.

was

was preſent to every object, and regardful of the moſt trifling occurrences. He had the art of eſcaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himſelf to every new ſcene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the ſmall time which he ſpent in viſible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in curſory converſation with the ſame ſteadineſs of attention as others apply to a lecture, and, amidſt the appearance of thoughtleſs gaiety, loſt no new idea that was ſtarted, nor any hint that could be improved. He had therefore made in coffee-houſes the ſame proficiency as in other ſtudies; and it is remarkable, that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning ſcarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obſcures as embelliſhes them.

His judgment was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment, and it is not without ſome ſatisfaction, that I can produce the ſuffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain ſuch odious ideas, as ſome, who perhaps had neither his judgment nor experience, have publiſhed, either in oſtentation of their ſagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for converſation, of which he knew how to practiſe all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modeſt and eaſy, open and reſpectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humorous ſubjects. He was generally cenſured for not knowing when to retire, but that was not the defect of his judgment, but of his fortune; when he left his company, he was frequently to ſpend the

the remaining part of the night in the ſtreet, or at leaſt was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not ſtrange that he delayed as long as he could, and ſometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himſelf.

It cannot be ſaid, that he made uſe of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct: an irregular and diſſipated manner of life had made him the ſlave of every paſſion that happened to be excited by the preſence of its object, and that ſlavery to his paſſions reciprocally produced a life irregular and diſſipated. He was not maſter of his own motions, nor could promiſe any thing for the next day.

With regard to his economy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life: He appeared to think himſelf born to be ſupported by others, and diſpenſed from all neceſſity of providing for himſelf; he therefore never proſecuted any ſcheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to ſecure the profits which his writings might have afforded him.

His temper was, in conſequence of the dominion of his paſſions, uncertain and capricious; he was eaſily engaged, and eaſily diſguſted; but he is accuſed of retaining his hatred more tenaciouſly than his benevolence.

He was compaſſionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked, and very ſmall offences were ſufficient to provoke him, he would proſecute his revenge with the utmoſt acrimony till his paſſion had ſubſided.

His friendſhip was therefore of little value; for though he was zealous in the ſupport or vindication of thoſe whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to truſt him, becauſe he conſidered himſelf as diſcharged by the firſt quarrel from all ties of honour or

gratitude; and would betray those secrets, which, in the warmth of confidence, had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him an universal accusation of ingratitude; nor can it be denied that he was very ready to set himself free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to conceive himself in a state of dependance, his pride being equally powerful with his other passions, and appearing in the form of insolence at one time, and of vanity at another. Vanity, the most innocent species of pride, was most frequently predominant: He could not easily leave off, when he had once began to mention himself, or his works; nor ever read his verses, without stealing his eyes from the page, to discover, in the faces of his audience, how they were affected with any favourite passage.

A kinder name than that of vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to separate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praise to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been suggested or amended, and was so accurate, as to relate that he owed three words in THE WANDERER to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was questioned, but with little reason; his accounts, though not indeed always the same, were generally consistent. When he loved any man he suppressed all his faults; and when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues: But his characters were generally true, so far as he proceeded; though it cannot be denied, that his partiality might have sometimes the effect of falsehood.

In cases indifferent he was zealous for virtue, truth, and justice: he knew very well the necessity of good-

ness

neſs to the preſent and future happineſs of mankind; nor is there perhaps any writer, who has leſs endeavoured to pleaſe by flattering the appetites, or perverting the judgment.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceaſes to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had reſolved to ſuppreſs be excepted, he has very little to fear from the ſtricteſt moral or religious cenſure. And though he may not be altogether ſecure againſt the objections of the critic, it muſt however be acknowledged, that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical; and, what many writers who have been more laviſhly applauded cannot boaſt, that they have an original air, which has no reſemblance of any foregoing writer; that the verſification and ſentiments have a caſt peculiar to themſelves, which no man can imitate with ſucceſs, becauſe what was nature in Savage, would in another be affectation. It muſt be confeſſed that his deſcriptions are ſtriking, his images animated, his fictions juſtly imagined, and his allegories artfully purſued; that his diction is elevated, though ſometimes forced, and his numbers ſonorous and majeſtic, though frequently ſluggiſh and encumbered. Of his ſtyle the general fault is harſhneſs, and its general excellence is dignity; of his ſentiments the prevailing beauty is ſublimity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his writings, none, who candidly conſider his fortune, will think an apology either neceſſary or difficult. If he was not always ſufficiently inſtructed in his ſubject, his knowledge was at leaſt greater than could have been attained by others in the ſame ſtate. If his works were ſometimes unfiniſhed, accuracy cannot reaſonably be exacted from a man oppreſſed with want, which he has

has no hope of relieving, but by a ſpeedy publication. The inſolence and reſentment of which he is accuſed, were not eaſily to be avoided by a great mind, irritated by perpepetual hardſhips, and conſtrained hourly to return the ſpurns of contempt, and repreſs the inſolence of proſperity; and vanity may ſurely readily be pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praiſes, and the conſciouſneſs of deſerving them.

Thoſe are no proper judges of his conduct, who have ſlumbered away their time on the down of affluence; nor will any wiſe man preſume to ſay, 'Had I been in Savage's condition, I ſhould have 'lived or written better than Savage.'

This relation will not be wholly without its uſe, if thoſe, who languiſh under any part of his ſufferings, ſhall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only thoſe afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or thoſe, who, in confidence of ſuperior capacities or attainments, diſregard the common maxims of life, ſhall be reminded that nothing will ſupply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge uſeleſs, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

END OF THE LIFE OF MR. SAVAGE.

LOVE

LOVE IN A VEIL.

A

COMEDY.

ACTED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN DRURY-LANE,

IN THE YEAR 1719,

BY HIS MAJESTY's SERVANTS.

Love, ſtudious how to pleaſe, improves our parts,
With poliſh'd manners, and adorns with arts.

DRYDEN.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

G E O R G E,

L O R D L A N S D O W N.

MY LORD,

AN address from a stranger, and one that like me, ought to have more recommendation than I am afraid you will find in this. It is my misfortune to stand in such a relation to the late Lord Rivers, by the Countess of ——, as neither of us can be proud of owning; but that is the smallest part of my misfortunes, since I am one of those sons of sorrow, to whom he left nothing to alleviate the sin of my birth. Under this scene of affliction I have had leisure enough to divert my hours of melancholy with writing this

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE,

LORD LANDSDOWN.

MY LORD,

AN addreſs from a ſtranger, and one that aſks favours too, ought to have more recommendation than I am afraid you will find in this. It is my misfortune to ſtand in ſuch a relation to the late Earl RIVERS, by the Counteſs of ———, as neither of us can be proud of owning; but that is the ſmalleſt part of my unhappineſs, ſince I am one of thoſe ſons of ſorrow, to whom he left nothing to alleviate the ſin of my birth. Under this ſcene of affliction I have had leiſure enough to divert my hours of melancholy with writing this

COMEDY, for which I humbly beg Your Lordship's patronage. My play, and myself, my Lord, are equally orphans, and in that view only I desire Your Lordship would look upon

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

RICHARD SAVAGE.

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. THURMOND.

THE youthful author of our scenes to-day,
Who scarce writes man, has boldly writ a play!
But now we fear new plays no more can thrive
Than summer-fruits in winter frosts survive.
Poetic laurels then triumphant show,
And shall their branches now less chearful grow?
Shall those kind genial heats that bless the year,
Come to create a barren season here?
Or, shall that tree, fame's wreath by PHOEBUS made,
Now parch! and at his sultry influence fade?

Our poet, who to-night attempts at praise,
From various turns, wou'd your diversion raise.
To please gay fancies, he at humour strove,
At plot for critics, for the ladies love.
Yet life's low scenes he owns may here seem scarce,
But well-wrought business makes amends for farce.
Not but our scene drawn on a foreign coast
Of home-bred fools might some resemblance boast;
For tho' each clime t'improve the muses toil,
Yet fools, like weeds, shoot up in ev'ry soil.

Our lively images are too sublime!
We draw our glory from the British clime.
In our wild hero's character we tell,
What love, what honour in the English dwell.
Not one of nature's monsters here we show,
Yet thro' our scenes some seeds of satire strow.
Be gen'rous then! and let our author's care,
Appease the critics, and divert the fair.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Lorenzo, governor of Valencia, father to Leonora,	Mr. Williams.
Alonzo, father to Fidelia,	Mr. Norris.
Sir Charles Winlove, an Engliſh gentleman, fled from Madrid for the death of his rival,	Mr. Mills.
Don Philip, a noble Spaniard, contracted to Leonora,	Mr. Thurmond.
Aſpin, ſervant to Sir. Cha. Winlove,	Mr. Miller.
Diego, ſervant to Alonzo,	Mr. Will. Mills.

WOMEN.

Leonora, daughter to the governor,	Mrs. Seymour.
Fidelia, a young lady fled after Sir Cha. Winlove to Valencia,	Miſs Willis
Flora, ſervant to Leonora,	Mrs. Garnet.

Alguzil, officers, keeper, and attendants.

SCENE VALENCIA.

LOVE IN A VEIL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Street.

Enter Sir Charles Winlove *and Don* Philip *meeting.*

Sir Cha. DON Philip!

D. Phil. Sir Charles Winlove! What miracle has brought you here?

Sir Cha. Why faith, 'tis a miracle owing to fortune—Have you heard what has happened to me at Madrid?

D. Phil. I heard of your unfortunate adventure there, before I left it—How long have you been come to Valencia?

Sir Cha. About a fortnight; and I only wait for a fair wind to carry me to England.

D. Phil. I'd advise you to make the best of your way, for there was a rumour that orders wou'd be sent to the sea-ports to put a stop to your passage.

Sir Cha. Why this comes now of intriguing in Spain—A man can't carry on an amour, but he must cut the throat of some jealous coxcomb or other to cure him of his impertinence—But what other news? I find you left Madrid later than I did—Is my rival, that I wounded, dead?

D. Phil. When I came away I heard that his life was despair'd of.—And that the lady for whom your quarrel began, was fled from her father's house.

Sir Cha. I am sorry, for her sake, for she is every way so agreeable, that cou'd I learn to be constant, 'twould be only to her—But I find one love is still an antidote to expel another: For I have seen such a beauty here in Valencia!—

D. Phil. Another beauty! Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Ay, one so charming, so good-humour'd, and so witty, she's enough to turn the resolutions of a Cynic—

D. Phil. Is she a woman of quality?

Sir Cha. Faith, I can't tell—Her appearance is as yet like that of Cynthia in a cloud, for I have never seen her but in a VEIL.

D. Phil. I thought to have heard that you'd have been more cautious, Sir Charles—But I find you are still the same, and are resolv'd, to bear the frowns of fortune with as much pleasure as her smiles—

Sir Cha. Ay, Don Philip, let cowards fear her; and fools, her daily favourites, adore her—For my part, love and friendship shall still be the darlings of my soul—And new pleasures the continual business of my life—But prithee, what sort of company have you here in Valencia?—For tho' I am returning

ing to England, I am ſo tir'd with politics, that I perfectly nauſeate the converſation of it.

D. Phil. How ſo? Is there no other to be had then?—

Sir Cha. None! Politicians ſtart out of every profeſſion, and ſtock-jobbers lies are the only diſcourſe one can meet with.

D. Phil. I hope the beaus don't turn politicians in any nation—

Sir Cha. The beaus! Why the very women are turn'd politicians—In ſhort, the goſſiping of the tea-table is as much infected as the ſociety of the coffee-houſes—How are you at this part of the globe?

D. Phil. We are like the reſt of the world.—Here are all manner of characters—Huſbands that are jealous of their honour, and wives that as craftily betray it—For the ladies—Here's a compoſition of all nations—Some boaſt the affectation of the French; ſome their own natural Spaniſh pride; and others the beauty and obſtinacy of your Engliſh women—Then for the men, here are from the formal grandees to the extravagant fop; and from the cavaliers of quality to the very fortune-hunter—In ſhort, here are all degrees whatſoever—Some of 'em rely upon the merit of their riches, and others upon that of their aſſurance—

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. Assurance is the most thriving virtue of the age. 'Tis a fortune for a courtier, and a prevailing eloquence in a lover—But amongst the rest, What sort of a man is your governor?

D. Phil. A man of quality, and one whose innate worth is an honour to the office he bears—Now I think on't, he may be of service to you.

Sir Cha. Ay; prithee which way?

D. Phil. He has a daughter.

Sir Cha. Is she very handsome;

D. Phil. Beautiful as an angel; and then for her wit, 'tis as enchanting as her beauty; her repartees are as quick as her eyes, and—

Sir Cha. And when shall I see her, Don Philip?

D. Phil. She's to be my wife—For which purpose I am come here to Valencia.—

Sir Cha. How coud'st thou be so ill-natur'd now, to raise my fancy to such a pitch for this? What service can it be to me?

D. Phil. I did not design to help you to a mistress, Sir Charles, I only had a mind to let you know my interest with the governor; and I hope to win him to intercede for your pardon, and to wink at your security here.—

Sir Cha. Oh! you are ever obliging, Don Philip.

D. Phil. This is a trifle amongst friends.—I remember

member in England, when I was oppreſs'd by odds, you ſav'd my life with hazard of your own—Here I run no riſque in the preſervation of yours—But how d'ye intend to ſpend the day?

Sir Cha. I have an aſſignation, but the time is not yet expir'd.

D. Phil. In the mean time what ſay you to a glaſs of good wine?

Sir Cha. With all my heart—For 'tis ſtill my opinion, that next to the chat of a lady at her tea-table, there's no pleaſure like the ſociety of a friend over a bottle.—

D. Phil. Oh you are ever pleaſant, Sir Charles.—But ha! Who comes here?

Sir Cha. 'Tis my ſervant?—Don Philip, you'll excuſe me a little, I'll be with you immediately.

D. Phil. I ſee you are upon the ſcent of an intrigue! Well, I won't interrupt you—when you have done with your emiſſary, follow me to the next inn, where I'll wait for you.

Sir Cha. Do ſo; I'll talk but a minute with my man, and then I am your's over a bottle.

[*Exit* Don Philip.

Enter Aſpin.

So, Aſpin, What news have you brought me of the lady in the VEIL?

Aſp.

Aſp. News! Sir; if I had accompliſh'd my ends, I cou'd have brought you news and ſucceſs enough to make your heart leap up to your mouth.

Sir Cha. Look ye, Sirrah, don't trifle, my time's too precious, by repeating what you only fancy you cou'd have done; but tell me what ſucceſs you have had in reality.—Did you dog the lady as I order'd you?

Aſp. Dog the lady! Ay, Sir, I have dog'd her to ſome purpoſe! Well, I'll ſay no more; but if expedition and conduct can make a ſtateſman, Aſpin may in time come to be diſtinguiſh'd by a title.

Sir Cha. Nay, I can ſcarce doubt of your ſucceſs, for I know thou art an excellent ſetter upon occaſion.

Aſp. Ay, and a runner too, as you'll find by the ſequel of the ſtory—Look ye, Sir, you may remember you order'd me to watch the lady home; I obey'd your commands, but ſhe perceiving my employment, led me through the mazes of ſeveral blind alleys; notwithſtanding which, like an experienc'd inſtrument of the game, I ſtill kept as cloſe a ſcent after her, as hound after a coney.

Sir Cha. A very pretty ſimilitude!—But have you hous'd her? Tell me that part of the ſtory, Aſpin!

Aſp. Hous'd her! No, Sir, I han't hous'd her!

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. No, Sirrah! Then what's the end of all this mighty performance?

Asp. Nothing at all, Sir!—In ſhort there fell out an unlucky accident; for as I was hot in the purſuit, I happen'd to ſtumble upon a pebble, ſprain'd my ancle, and loſt the ſight of her in a moment.

Sir Cha. Now, Sirrah, wou'd I cane you for the diſappointment, but that I have other affairs in hand. —Mark me, I am now going to drink a bottle with a friend, in an hour I am to meet the lady at my lodging; and if you don't look better to your poſt, I'll break that raſcally head of yours, Sirrah.

[*Exit.*

Aſp. Ay, to be ſure! What damnable lives do we poor valets lead! if we ſucceed in the moſt difficult adventure, we do but our duty forſooth; but if we fail, I'll break your head you raſcal; hold, let me think how ſhall I retrieve my misfortunes. [*Studies.*

Enter Diego.

Dieg. Hiſt! Friend, do you live hereabouts?

Aſp. Hum! ha! Why, what is that to you, friend, where I live? I owe you nothing.

Dieg. But I owe you a great deal.

Aſp. Say you ſo, Sir! Come, pay then, pay;—egad this

this fellow has miſtaken me for ſomebody elſe; now if I ſhould luckily come in for a round ſum that I have no pretence to, faith 'twould be very welcome—But as you was ſaying, Sir! what do you owe me?

Dieg. A great deal of reſpect, Sir, as you are a fine gentleman, and all that, Sir—

Aſp. Phough, pox, d'ye mean to banter me? If that's all, I won't give a pin for your debt, Sir.

Dieg. Oh! But, Sir! you don't comprehend me; my reſpect is but the prelude to ſomething greater.

Aſp. Ha! To ſomething greater! Egad this fellow has the air of what we call in downright Engliſh a pimp. Odſo! Aſpin, thou art a made man!

Dieg. The fellow ſeems tickled with ſome imagination that may be of uſe to me, I'll ſtudy to improve it [*Aſide*]. But as I was ſaying, Sir, may not I be ſo happy to know your lodging—Come, don't ſtand in your own light, I'll engage you ſhall be handſomely rewarded by one greater than myſelf.

Aſp. Egad it is ſo—Some Seignora has fix'd her affections upon me; what is ſhe, Sir; what is ſhe?—Harkee, which part of me has tickled her ladyſhip's fancy? ha!

Dieg. As I gueſs'd; I'll humour him—I am under an obligation not to—

Aſp. Not to—What? Come, come, hang ſecrecy!

Is

Is it the broadneſs of my ſhoulders, the bigneſs of my calves, or the air of my gait,—that has done it? Ha? Odſo, now I think on't, I warrant the jade has heard I am an Iriſhman—Ay, there it is faith now.

Dieg. Ay, ay, you have hit it! Therefore, if you'll let me ſee where you lodge, I'll bring a chair for you in the evening, and convey you to the arms of the moſt beautiful Madona in all Valencia.

Aſp. Ay! But upon ſecond thoughts! I find I am very unfit for ſuch an adventure.

Dieg. What do you mean?

Aſp. Mean! Why I mean that I ever had from my cradle a damnable averſion to a piſtol, or a poniard—Nay, now I think on't, laſt night I had an ugly dream about the noiſe of a piſtol—But hang dreams, they ſhall never fright a man of my courage.—Know then, Sir, I live at yonder green rails: I am but a valet, or ſo, Sir, but in an hour I ſhall be at my lady's command—In the mean time I'll follow the example of my maſter, and drink a bottle to—prepare myſelf for her ſervice. [*Exit.*

Dieg. This fool has betray'd his maſter as I cou'd wiſh—But now for my lord governor. [*Exit.*

SCENE,

SCENE, *The governor's house.*

Enter Lorenzo *with a letter, and* Diego.

Lor. Bring you this from Madrid, say you?—But hold, let me peruse it.

" An English cavalier, who has lately kill'd
" a nobleman of Spain, is fled away with my
" daughter; and, as I am inform'd, they
" have taken their way to Valencia—I desire
" you will lose no time in endeavouring to
" seize 'em—The bearer will give you a full
" description of both. I am yours,
" From Madrid. " ALONZO."

I take it kindly that my friend remembers me in this misfortune—for I owe him many obligations—Who is this cavalier?

Dieg. He is call'd Sir Charles Winlove; and he undoubtedly stole her, for she was the cause of their duel.

Lor. Where do you think he is?

Dieg. My lord, I had just now notice of his lodging from his own servant, and if you please I'll prepare officers in order to seize him.

Lor. Do so, and I'll go in person! [*Exit* Diego. Unfor-

Unfortunate Alonzo! how unhappy is the man, the honour of whose family depends on a woman.

Enter Leonora *and* Flora.

Leo. What makes you so thoughtful, Sir.

Lor. If you knew the contents of this paper, Leonora, you wou'd not wonder that the cares of a father shou'd make me thoughtful.

Leo. Why so, my lord? I hope I have not been guilty of any thing to displease you.

Lor. Not as yet—But the duty of a parent is a great weight; and where the loss of honour depends, 'tis to be fear'd more than the loss of life—I am in haste at present, and must defer this subject till another opportunity—In the mean time take heed, my Leonora. [*Exit.*

Leo. I am confus'd!—What does my father mean by the loss of honour?

Flo. I am afraid, Madam, that he knows some of your haunts, and therefore I'd advise you to be cautious.

Leo. 'Tis hard that a Spanish woman can't have an amour, but some jealous-pated father or brother must interfere with the honour of his family. Now I have heard, that the English women may take what diversion they please, and be rather celebrated

for their beauty, than cenſur'd.—Nay, that the very wives may have a whole equipage of lovers, and be the more admired by their huſbands.

Flo. 'Tis the nature of the climate, Madam; as in France the coquet is rather admir'd for her airs, than cenſur'd for her inclinations. Not but there's detraction in both climates; but there 'tis a pleaſure peculiar to the women, where ſcandal paſſes for wit, and one beauty riſes on the falling reputation of another. The men, unleſs the beaus, have nothing to do with it; and thoſe no farther, than a little raillery for their diverſion.

Leo. I cou'd be as free as they had I the power—For I have choſe a perſon of my own liking, and my father has contracted me to one that is indifferent to me. Now, methinks, there's ſuch a pleaſure in the diſobedience, that it adds an eloquence to the ſuit of a lover.

Flo. But, Madam, d' ye conſider that the nature of this country is revenge—Here is none of the careleſs brother, the indulgent father, nor the meek animal, a huſband.

Leo. 'Tis want of courage in our lovers to put a good cuſtom in practice, otherwiſe the jealous fury of a Spaniſh Don might in time be moderated to the content of a London citizen.

Flo.

Flo. But, Madam, you have not ſo much reaſon to complain—Is not Don Philip, your intended huſband, a noble Spaniard, and as agreeable as the Engliſh cavalier?

Leo. Oh what a hideous compariſon have you made! the Engliſh cavalier! Is he not all that a woman can wiſh for? A man of gallantry—Beautiful in his perſon, and agreeable in his converſation? Are not all the perſuaſive charms of wit upon his tongue? Is he not, in ſhort, an Engliſhman?

Flo. Is not Don Philip a man of honour? of a gallant diſpoſition—And then he loves you as well as the other.

Leo. Ay, but then he is to be my huſband, Flora; and the proſpect of a forc'd marriage eclipſes the worth of a ſuitor—Beſides, my mother was an Engliſhwoman—Therefore I am of ſo gay a temper, and ſo naturally fond of liberty, that I can never be confin'd to the humours of a jealous Spaniard.

Flo. I am convinc'd, Madam, by your inclinations to the Engliſh cavalier, that beauty is totally owing to fancy—But how came you acquainted with him at firſt?

Leo. I'll tell you—You know when my father ſent for me to Valencia, the people after my arrival crowded to ſee me—I was admir'd by the men, and

envy'd by the women—When I appear'd at church, all were in a conſternation—whiſpering, This is the governor's daughter—till, contrary to my ſex, I was almoſt tir'd with vanity itſelf—One day I went VEIL'D into the walks to divert myſelf—There I thought I ſaw my father, but afterwards it prov'd otherwiſe—Then I flew into a ſummer-houſe to avoid him—where I met this ſtranger, who, ſeeing me in diſtreſs, proffer'd his aſſiſtance—I was pleas'd with the compliment, and lik'd both his converſation and his perſon—He preſs'd to know me; but I refus'd it—However, I have often ſeen him ſince, and muſt in ſhort, according to appointment, meet him inſtantly again.——

Flo. But, Madam, your father has agreed for your marriage, and this apartment has received your intended huſband.

Enter Servant.

Serv. A lady deſires to ſee you, Madam.

Leo. Who is ſhe?

Serv. I never ſaw her before.

Leo. Deſire her to walk in.

Enter Fidelia VEIL'D.

Fide. Madam, I am come, tho' unknown, an humble petitioner to you.

Leo.

Leo. If 'tis a ſecret, I'll hear it alone, Madam.

Fide. No, 'tis what a ſervant muſt know, if granted.

Leo. In what can I ſerve you.

Fide. In giving refuge to an unfortunate perſon —But ere I tell you my ſtory, be pleas'd to peruſe that letter.

Leo. Madam, you are welcome upon the recommendation of Theodoſia—I hope ſhe's well.

Fide. I thank you, Madam, ſhe's very well.

Leo. You ſhall be us'd with as much reſpect as myſelf—She has here inform'd me, you're unfortunate; but the particulars I am ignorant of.

Fide. That taſk is left for me—which I ſhall tell you in a few words—I am the daughter of a nobleman, whoſe name, in reſpect to him, I conceal—I lov'd, unknown to him, an Engliſh cavalier—for whom, as I was waiting one night at the garden-gate, another whom I ſlighted ruſh'd in with him.

Leo. I fear the conſequence was fatal, Madam.

Fide. It was indeed!—He, whom I had the leaſt affection for, exaſperated by jealouſy and revenge, immediately drew—They fought: he fell! Whereupon the Engliſh gentleman preſently took horſe, and rode away.

Leo. What courſe cou'd you take in this extremity of fortune?

Fide. Alas! Madam, I was ſo frighten'd, I knew not what I did—I ſhriek'd and cry'd for help when it was too late—Thereupon a tumult aroſe—My father call'd for me! Inſtead of anſwering him, I fled from his anger, and Theodoſia conceal'd me till I came here—The unhappy gentleman that was vanquiſh'd, liv'd to tell who kill'd him, and the cauſe; and by this time I believe is expir'd.

Leo. I am ſorry for your misfortunes, and will endeavour to moderate 'em.—I know, myſelf, what 'tis to love againſt a father's will.—Therefore depend on my aſſiſtance.

Fide. Madam, I thank you; that's all that's in my power.

Leo. No more ceremonies—You are Theodoſia's repreſentative of friendſhip, and as ſuch I eſteem you—Flora, ſhew the lady in, and order Clara to attend her—I wou'd not have my father ſee you, till he has given leave to receive you.

[*Exeunt* Fidelia *and* Flora.

Leo. Methinks I am touch'd for her misfortunes, as if my own—Beſides, who knows what the conſequences of my love may prove?

Enter

Enter Flora.

Leo. My VEIL, Flora; I'll meet this cavalier inſtantly.

Flo. Madam, beware of a diſcovery by ſo often venturing.

Leo. Too much caution is no good conduct in an amour; for lovers have a thouſand artifices in the worſt of dangers.

In love and war we muſt no fears betray,
Valour's the conduct that muſt win the day.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A garden.

Enter Sir Charles, *and* Aſpin.

Sir Cha. 'TWAS excellent wine; and methinks my miſtreſs's health has ſo elevated my fancy, that it has inſpir'd me for the aſſignation—Let me ſee, 'tis juſt upon the time of the appointment—Where have you been, ſirrah?

Aſp. Drinking the lady's health, Sir.

Sir Cha. You are a pretty fellow to toaſt that indeed.

Aſp. Sir, I gueſs'd you were at the ſame ſport, and that made me follow the example.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, the airs of my converſation as ill become one of your character, as thoſe of my dreſs; but, like the vulgar in a factious country, you love to ape the actions of your ſuperiors.

Aſp. Sir, a valet claims as great a title to his maſter's ſecond-hand wit, as to his caſt-off cloaths; and cuſtom has equally made 'em the due perquiſites of his place.

Sir Cha. Retire quickly—The lady's coming.

[*Exit* Aſpin.

Enter Leonora *and* Flora.

Thus Sol, when he his amber beauty ſhrouds,
Revives the flowers, tho' wrapt, like you, in clouds.
In beams that ſtray, ſome cheerful influence ſteals,
Till the kind God at length his rays reveals.

Leo. That's more than I may chance to do, if you are ſo complaiſant as to mean me by the compariſon.

Sir Cha. That you may chance to do! I am very glad, Madam, that you are ſo dubious as to leave it to chance. 'Tis poſſible you may chance to be cruel, but I hope that the probability is to the contrary.

Leo. The probability depends indeed upon your hope

hope—And lovers hopes are at beſt but ſhadows of thought, that produce no reality.

Sir Cha. Madam, you are pleas'd to be witty, and I admire you for it—But the ſight of you wou'd make me your perfect adorer.

Leo. D'ye think there's no true love without ſeeing the object.

Sir Cha. No, certainly.

Leo. How d'ye think a blind man can be ſenſible of the paſſion, if he did not depend on his imagination. Now, perhaps, were you to ſee me, you'd no longer admire me; therefore I think you had beſt remain as you are.

Sir Cha. Hold; I forbid that, Madam—A blind man can never hope to ſee the object of his affections, and therefore can never expect to ſatisfy his curioſity—But ſight was given me to make uſe of—And ſhou'd I be ſo contented, I ſhou'd ſuffer you to blind my reaſon, as well as my eyes.

Leo. Can you be a lover, and pretend to the uſe of reaſon—That's a contradiction in itſelf.

Sir Cha. Not in the leaſt—'Tis a ranging unſettled paſſion that's a contradiction to good ſenſe—But love and reaſon are inſeparable, like wit and judgment—For as one is fond of the beauty, the other diſtinguiſhes the value of the bleſſing, and therefore knows how to prize it.

Leo.

Leo. Notwithſtanding your rhetoric, they are an objection to each other—For according to the dictates of love, I ought to grant your deſires, and let you ſee me—But ſhou'd I now follow the maxims of reaſon, I ſhou'd remain in a cloud as I am—and here break off our correſpondence.

Sir Cha. That I deny—For as love has prompted you thus far, reaſon will ſhew you 'tis too late now to retire; therefore you ſee that every argument you raiſe is an objection to your cruelty—Beſides, when we parted laſt, you promiſed I ſhould ſee you—And I hope you will be as good as your word now.

Leo. But you know the promiſes of ladies, lovers, and courtiers are ſeldom of any effect—However, I won't ſtand with you for a trifle—How d'ye like me? [*Unveils.*

Sir Cha. I am conſidering with myſelf, whether you are an angel, or a woman—I thought ſo much wit cou'd not be obſcur'd in a common form—And now I ſtand convinc'd in admiration. [*Noiſe.* Hey! What's the matter now?

Enter Aſpin *in a fright.*

Aſp. Fly, Sir, fly immediately for your life.

Sir Cha. Fly! prithee for what reaſon?

Aſp. We ſhall only be hang'd, Sir, that's all, if we

we ſtay—But I'll ſecure the garden-door to favour our retreat, if there's any to be made.

[*Shuts the garden-door.*

Leo. What's the matter, fellow? are you mad?

Aſp. Mad! No, 'tis my maſter is mad to ſtay here—Leap over the wall—Fly any way, Sir, for here's the governor with a whole troop of Jacks-in-office at his heels come to ſeize you.

Leo. Alas, my father, Flora! undoubtedly he's come thus on my account.

Sir Cha. Sure no man is ſo unfortunate!—Can love never come, but attended with croſſes and diſappointments?

Aſp. Dear Sir, don't talk of love now—Conſider, we are in danger of a halter.

Lor. Force open the doors there. [*Within.*

Aſp. Sir, what d'ye mean? Love is always the forerunner of miſchief—A pox on it, our misfortune came from love before.

Leo. Sir, I am ruin'd if the governor ſees me.

Sir Cha. Fair lady, I muſt leave you, my life depends on it.

Leo. And my honour—Hold; Can you be ſo barbarous to leave me here?

Aſp. Can you be ſo barbarous to make us ſtay here, if you go to that. [*Noiſe.*

Sir,

Sir, make haſte, or we ſhall be too late.

Leo. Stay! I am greater than you think—'Tis for me they come—And can you leave a woman in diſtreſs? think you my honour's nothing?

Aſp. Nothing at all to compare with our lives—

[*Noiſe again.*

Sir, Are you mad? don't you hear?

Sir Cha. 'Twas ungenerous in me to leave Fidelia in danger—They ſhan't ſay I always ſerve a woman ſo—Madam, my life ſhall anſwer for your defence—Go into that arbour, whilſt I guard the door.

[*Exit* Leonora. *She drops her glove.*

Aſp. Nay, ſince you are reſolv'd to be taken, Sir, I'll not keep you company. [*Goes to climb the wall.*

Sir Cha. Come down you pigeon-hearted raſcal, and learn to ſtand to a noble defence.

Aſp. Sir, conduct is more requir'd than courage—Therefore to run away will be the nobleſt defence, becauſe 'tis the wiſeſt. [*Noiſe again.*

Sir Cha. So! now they come! the door is falling from its hinges.

Enter Lorenzo, Alguazil, *and officers.*

Lor. Are not you, Sir Charles Winlove, an Engliſh cavalier?

Sir

Sir Cha. I ſcorn to deny my name.

Lor. Seize him! now to priſon with him.

Sir Cha. Sir, conſider, I'm no common perſon.

Lor. I know you are a man of quality, and as ſuch I ſhall uſe you. Reſtore the gentleman his ſword—Where's the lady?

Sir Cha. The lady, ſay you?

Lor. Ay, the lady, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. A lady with me! What d'ye mean, my lord?

Lor. You need not deny it, I come well inform'd. —Search about there.

Sir Cha. What woman can it be that has brought me into this misfortune? [*Officers find* Aſpin.

Lor. What fellow's that.

Sir Cha. A ſervant of mine, my lord.

Lor. Secure him.

Aſp. Now, Sir, had not leaping over the wall, and making to ſea, been a much better journey than a ride to the gallows?—We had better have run the riſque of being pickled in ſalt water, than of hanging like a couple of ſigns between earth and air; you for a warning to all reſolute lovers, and I to ſuch ſervants as follow their maſters deſperate fortunes.

Lor. What glove's that?

Alg. 'Tis a lady's.

Lor.

Lor. Then 'tis probable she can't be far off—Search that arbour. [*They bring in* Leonora *veil'd.*

Leo. I am half dead with confusion—'Tis my father! what can I expect? [*Aside.*

Alg. In a corner of the arbour we found this lady—Unveil to my lord governor.

Lor. Madam, you need not, for I know you well.

Leo. What does he say? Was ever woman so unfortunate! [*Aside.*

Lor. I am sensible what courtesy I owe you—Pardon the nature of my coming for you.

Sir Cha. And pardon me that she does not go with you—For single as I am, and thus oppress'd by odds, I had rather die, than she shou'd be a sufferer.

Leo. Generous cavalier! [*Aside.*

Lor. Is this the honourable use you make of the restoration of your sword?—But you shall find we can quell you, Sir.

Sir Cha. I tell you, my lord, I know to oppose you is to die; and that I can, with pleasure, in vindication of distress'd innocence.

Lor. Don't think to deceive me! I know you both—Her father's so much my friend, I am equally concern'd with him for her.

Leo.

Leo. Theſe words confirm my fears! what ſhall I think or ſay? [*Aſide.*

Sir Cha. Uſe her well, my lord, that's all I aſk.

Lor. My honour on her uſage.

Aſp. Nay, if our general comes to a parley, a ſurrender follows of courſe—Sir, my courage is rais'd at laſt, and ſo let us e'en fight it out with 'em now.

Sir Cha. My lord, I rely on your honour, and ſubmit.

Leo. Then I am loſt. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Keep your ſword ſtill—Here, take this gentleman to the caſtle—For the lady, ſhe ſhall be in my houſe, and receiv'd there as my daughter.

Leo. As his daughter! I ſee now I am certainly diſcover'd. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Bring that fellow along—He ſhall go with his maſter—Hark you, a word with you. [*To Alg.*

Aſp. Now, when I am in the humour of fighting, 'tis very hard to be given up a priſoner, and have my valour nipt in the bud.

Sir Cha. Madam, don't be dejected—Our next meeting may be a turn of joy—And I hope this adventure in the end will but prove like a little diſcord in muſic, which raiſes it to a ſweeter harmony.

Lor. Come, 'tis time for you to part—Mr. Alguazil,

guazil, disposé of the lady as I order'd you—Lead on there. [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter Flora.

Flo. So! they are gone! I overheard all, and 'twas lucky they did not see me in the opposite corner to my lady—What woman wou'd trust an assignation, if this was always to be the consequence?—But I must run home the back-ways, and prepare the family for her reception. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The governor's house.*

Enter Don Philip.

D. Phil. What! nobody to be found! Methinks the house looks as if the family had deserted it—Where can they all be gone?

Enter Flora.

Flo. So! thanks to my stars, I have got home before 'em—But I have run till I am quite out of breath. [*Starts.* Don Philip!

D. Phil. Flora, where are all the family?

Flo. My lady is gone abroad.

D. Phil. Where's my lord governor?

Flo.

Flo. He has juſt now ſent an Engliſh cavalier priſoner to the caſtle.

D. Phil. Ha! an Engliſh cavalier! d'ye know who he is!

Flo. One Sir Charles Winlove, my lord!

D. Phil. Flora! that cavalier is my deareſt friend —But wherefore do I loiter!—I'll fly this moment to meet the governor, and try to intercede in his behalf. [*Exit.*

Flo. There's one obſtacle remov'd—But here they come.

Enter Alguazil, *officers, and* Leonora.

Alg. Where's the lady Leonora? I have a meſſage to her from the governor.

Leo. What does the fellow mean? [*Aſide.*

Flo. There's certainly ſome miſtake in this—I'll humour it. [*Aſide.*] Perhaps it may prove a lucky turn. The lady Leonora's friend is abroad, and therefore you may leave your meſſage.

Alg. My lord governor has ſent this perſon a priſoner—But orders that your lady will take care to have her us'd reſpectfully—So here my commiſſion ends, and I leave her to your charge. [*Exeunt.*

Leo. Are they gone?

Flo. Yes.

Leo. I was never ſo frighten'd in my life—What excuſe ſhall I make to my father? Certainly, he knew me by what he ſaid—And his caution to me this morning confirms it.

Flo. I rather believe, Madam, he miſtook you for another; and, by all circumſtances, for the lady you receiv'd to-day.

Leo. Ha! I have a thought—She ſaid ſhe look'd for an Engliſh cavalier that has kill'd a man.

Flo. And, Madam, by the circumſtance of flying from her father's houſe, my lord governor may think he has ſeiz'd 'em together.

Leo. If ſo, I have a rival.

Flo. If ſo, you'll come clear off, by turning it upon her; I'll take away your VEIL, that you mayn't ſeem as if you had been abroad.

[*Exit, and returns.*

Leo. Thou'rt a perfect Machiavel, Flora—I cou'd no more part with thee, than I cou'd with my better genius.

Flo. A good ſervant is as great a jewel as a good huſband, Madam—And if you play your cards to the beſt advantage, 'tis not in the power of fortune to pique you.

Leo. But ſhou'd I ſerve the lady ſo now I have receiv'd

receiv'd her, 'twill be a breach of friendſhip and hoſpitality.

Flo. Great ſtateſmen always ſacrifice their friendſhip to their intereſt—Beſides, ſelf-preſervation is the firſt law of nature; and if you neglect this opportunity, you are ruin'd for ever.

Leo. But ſtill, methinks, I have ſome ſcruples of honour, Flora.

Flo. A lady's honour, Madam, conſiſts in her reputation; and if you perſiſt, you'll ſacrifice that to the cenſure of the world, and be oblig'd, like her you have receiv'd, to fly from your father's houſe.

Leo. Well, thou art an excellent caſuiſt for the ſcruples of a tender conſcience—But if we ſhou'd be miſtaken in the lady, now.

Flo. Never fear, Madam—I heard my lord governor call the Engliſh cavalier by the title of Sir Charles Winlove—Therefore, for better ſatisfaction, aſk her the name of her lover—Oh, here ſhe comes opportunely to our purpoſe!

Leo. I'll ſift her by degrees, that ſhe mayn't ſuſpect me.

Enter Fidelia.

Fide. Have you preſs'd my ſuit to the governor yet, Madam?

Leo. I have not as yet had an opportunity; but I expect him every minute to come home, and then you may depend on't I'll use all my interest to serve you.

Fide. I see, Madam, you answer the character I have had of you—for you differ from the ladies of fashion, who, instead of pitying our sex in misfortunes, are the first that reflect on 'em, and expose 'em.

Leo. None of our sex are so ungenerous, but such, who, being guilty themselves, wou'd endeavour to hide their own frailties, by censuring the conduct of others.

Fide. I esteem it as the greatest happiness, that I have met with such a comfortable refuge in the midst of my misfortunes.

Leo. I am always, Madam, apt rather to assist a lady in distress than to reflect on her—But shou'd the governor comply with my request, what farther courses do you design to take?

Fide. I'll search out for the English cavalier, who, I am inform'd, is here in Valencia—Otherwise, if I should miss of him, I hear my friends are endeavouring to make my peace with my father; and as he was ever fond of me, I hope his tenderness will overcome his passion, and that he'll again receive me as his child.

Leo.

Leo. I hope all will turn to your advantage, Madam—But, in the mean time, what's the gentleman's name whom you are in ſearch of?—Perhaps I may learn where he is, if he's in Valencia?

Fide. His name is Sir Charles Winlove.

Leo. Sir Charles Winlove, ſay you! this increaſes my misfortunes—Have I foſter'd a rival?

Flo. Keep your temper, Madam, and ſtick to what you propos'd; we'll find an after-plot to redeem all.

Fide. She changes colour! what can this mean?

[*Aſide.*

Enter Lorenzo, *and* Diego *behind.*

Lor. Now you may return to Madrid, and inform Alonzo that his daughter's ſecur'd in my houſe, and Sir Charles Winlove in the caſtle.

Dieg. But, my lord, I han't ſeen her yet, and therefore can't affirm it.

Lor. I'll call her then.

Dieg. I ſhou'd rather be glad to ſee her, ſo that ſhe might not ſee me.

Lor. Hold; there's my daughter.

Dieg. And with her my lady—for ſhe on her left hand is Fidelia.

Lor. Now, can you return with confidence?

Dieg. I can, my lord; farewel. [*Exit.*

Leo. My father approaches!

Fide. I'll retire, Madam, while you preſs my ſuit to him. [*Going.*

Lor. What makes the lady ſhun me, Leonora?

Leo. Becauſe ſhe's a ſtranger, and that makes her a little reſerv'd, my lord.

Lor. D'ye remember my advice this morning, daughter?

Leo. Now my fears! [*Aſide.*

Lor. Now, Leonora, you may ſee the effect of making private aſſignations unknown to a father—and of expoſing a reputation, and the honour of a family—What d'ye think will be the conſequence of this?

Leo. Of what, my lord!—I am diſcover'd. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Recollect the adventures of this morning, and then you may gueſs at my meaning.

Leo. I ſee my ſtratagems are in vain—My lord, too well I underſtand you—And therefore throw me at your feet.

Flo. She has diſcover'd all! what ſhall we do now? [*Aſide.*

Lor. What do you mean! Are you at croſs-purpoſes, child?

Leo. My lord, I beg you hear me, and perhaps I may give you ſatisfaction. [*Kneels.*

Lor. Riſe then; and if you intend to give me ſatisfaction,

satisfaction, let it be in a reasonable answer—What makes you in this confusion?

Leo. My lord!

Lor. Are you so touch'd with yonder lady's misfortunes, that you kneel in her behalf?

Leo. Ha, I am amaz'd! what an unexpected turn is here.

Fide. The governor fixes his eyes on me! [*Aside.*

Lor. I am glad you are so good-natur'd, Leonora! for tho' that lady is a prisoner, she is the daughter of my dearest friend, and therefore I'd have her us'd with singular respect.

Leo. Am I in my senses! or do I dream!

Flo. Courage, Madam; all's well again. [*Apart.*

Leo. I had like to have betray'd myself by my timorous folly.

Fide. The governor approaches—I hope she has succeeded.

Leo. Ha! here comes another turn of discovery. [*Aside.*

Lor. Madam, you are welcome to my house—I know your quality, and am sorry for this accident.

Fide. My lord, I thank you—You see me here a stranger in this place—therefore, to raise your pity to my misfortunes, give me leave to relate their particulars.

Leo. Ha! if she talks, she betrays all—And then we shall be entirely undone. [*Aside.*

Lor. I know your story already, Madam—Our histories are full of such amorous adventures—but I question not, but your's will shortly have a happy end—In the mean time, this house shall rather be your sanctuary than confinement—Daughter, I recommend this lady to your conversation. [*Exit.*

Leo. Excellently come off!

Fide. I find, Madam, by my success, that you have pleaded strongly in my behalf.

Leo. I even kneel'd to my father to serve you, and am glad it has lain in my power.

Fide. I thank you, Madam—I shall never forget such obligations—You'll excuse me for retiring, for I am impatient till I have writ an account of my success to Theodosia. [*Exit.*

Leo. It goes according to our wish—My father supposes 'twas her he seiz'd with Sir Charles; and she knows nothing of her being a prisoner, but is pleas'd with her confinement.

Flo. The end must crown all, Madam—And if you can carry on the mistake—'twill be excellent indeed! But how d'ye intend to proceed?

Leo. Suppose I write to Sir Charles?

Flo. Consider, Madam, what you do.

Leo.

Leo. You are the first servant that ever was against a lover—You see we are come well off—In love, as in gaming, if we can make a shift to save ourselves, the hopes of winning is a temptation to play on.

Flo. But, Madam, a little luck is commonly a rock, that draws young gamesters in to their destruction.

Leo. A lucky cast is seldom won by a faint heart—Love is a lottery, and therefore—

As ventures only can our fortunes frame,
Those who will nothing stake no prize can claim.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Lorenzo *and Don* Philip *meeting.*

D. Phil. MY lord, you're well met—I am glad I have the good fortune to light on you.

Lor. Have you wanted me on any urgent occasion? Pray what may be the business?

D. Phil. I have an humble petition to your lordship, and you must promise me to grant it, before I tell the consequence.

Lor. That's very fine indeed! that I must give my consent, and not know to what—I suppose this is something in relation to my daughter.

D. Phil.

D. Phil. No, my lord; what I come now to requeſt is in behalf of a friend.

Lor. Be it as it will, Don Philip may command me in any thing, as far as the rules of honour will permit.

D. Phil. I hope, my lord, I ſhall never be ſo ungenerous as to require any thing that wou'd be a ſtain to your honour—but my petition to you is in behalf of Sir Charles Winlove, an Engliſh gentleman, who I am inform'd your lordſhip ſent this day a priſoner to the caſtle.

Lor. D'ye know him?

D. Phil. Very well, my lord, and know him to be a man of honour—I ow'd my life to him when I was in England—and ever after there was ſuch a friendſhip between us, that during my continuance there we were ſeldom or never aſunder.

Lor. I am glad to hear ſo honourable a character of the gentleman—I am ſorry for his misfortunes; but he has injur'd a particular friend of mine in relation to his daughter.

D. Phil. My lord, that proceeds from the wildneſs of his youth—we are all ſubject to ſuch faults—Sir Charles is what we eſteem a fine gentleman; and the Engliſh are all men of gallantry and intrigue—Beſides, if a young lady is inclinable

to

to be kind, what brisk cavalier can refuse her favours?

Lor. I wish I cou'd serve him with honour.

D. Phil. You may: consider, to confine a young gentleman from his pleasures, is blasting him in the bloom of his life—Besides, liberty is the very soul of the English, and they had rather submit to honourable death, than bondage.

Lor. What can I do in this affair?

D. Phil. If your lordship will allow him to be a prisoner at large, till you hear farther from Madrid, my honour shall be the pledge for his security.

Lor. I shou'd be willing to consent to this, were I to follow my own inclinations—but his commitment to the castle is for murder.

D. Phil. My lord, I know the circumstances of the story, and the people concern'd in't, except the young lady—therefore, if you'll believe me, when I left Madrid, the wounded cavalier was not actually dead—nay, there was some hopes of his recovery.

Lor. I had no such intimation in the letter I receiv'd this morning—but now I think on't, my friend may write so, because I shou'd secure his daughter—Are you sure of this?

D. Phil. Upon my honour, my lord, I am.

Lor. Then for once I'll yield to your desires—

Follow

Follow me, and I'll give you my signet—The keeper knowing you, will obey you at the sight of it—But remember I put my honour into your hands, therefore use it with discretion.

D. Phil. My lord, you may depend on it—Even friendship itself shou'd not win me to betray my trust. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *The castle.*

Enter Sir Charles *and* Aspin.

Sir Cha. Certainly never man was so unfortunate—Sure the fates have join'd in conspiracy to plague me in my amours—Nay, even the winds to compleat my ruin have oppos'd my passage to England—A very fine comfort 'tis indeed—Here am I in confinement, without a friend to come to my assistance—What the devil shall I do in this exigence of fortune!

Asp. Ay, think Sir—we are in a fine place indeed—See what it is to be a great man! The governor provides you with lodgings here in the metropolitan castle, where, for the security of your person he orders you a retinue of guards, as if in the king's palace; but methinks these honours, Sir, have a very scurvy countenance—Pray heaven we

we an't exalted to the higheſt *poſts* of the nation.

Sir Cha. I don't know what to think—The governor is certainly a man of quality, and can have no other view in this than the ſervice of his country—All that makes me dubious is, whether I am a priſoner for my own ſake, or the lady's.

Aſp. For both, Sir; but here comes one that will ſolve the riddle—A woman in a VEIL—There's certainly witchcraft in theſe women; for no ſooner name a ſhe-devil, but you find her at your elbow.

Enter Flora VEIL'D.

Flo. Cavalier! I come from a fair lady that was taken a priſoner with you this morning—Read that. [*Gives him a letter.*

Sir Cha. How does ſhe bear her confinement?

Flo. Like a turtle moaning for its mate—The poor lady has fretted till ſhe's in the ſpleen.

Sir Cha. I am ſorry that I ſhou'd be the cauſe of her misfortunes—But vexations in love are like cloudy April ſhowers; they bring forth the flowers of delight, to be chear'd by the warmth of the ſun in its full luſtre—But now for the letter.

Aſp. They ſay a witch commonly appears againſt ill weather, like a porpus before a ſtorm—Now prithee,

prithee, damſel, what can we prognoſticate from the ſight of you?

Flo. Prithee, fellow, learn more manners, and to be leſs pert in your diſcourſe.

Aſp. Nay, if you talk of being pert, commend me to a chambermaid, faith—But prithee, child, don't affect the airs of your miſtreſs thus—I an't ſo damnably in love with you.

Sir Cha. Hold your tongue, ſirrah—My little emiſſary, tell the lady I'll wait on her at night according to her command—till when, farewel.

Flo. Don't fail.

Aſp. You'll wait on her at night! Ha, ha, ha, Sir, 'tis already dark—therefore, if you have the keys of the caſtle in your pocket, let us ſhut the doors after us, and take up with another new lodging.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, I have a key, and a gold one too—Look here raſcal—this, by the virtue of a glittering ſmile, can make the priſon-doors fly open, and turn confinement into liberty.

Aſp. Why, truly, it has an alluring look—but, methinks, a little aqua fortis now wou'd be of much more ſervice.

Sir Cha. Why, you blockhead, d'ye think I intend to apply it to the bars, to break jail?

Aſp.

Asp. Ay, Sir, if you intend to keep your appointment with the lady.

Sir Cha. Yes, I do intend to keep it, and therefore this goes to the keeper.

Asp. So it may—But I believe he has more wit than to give you your freedom, if it does.

Sir Cha. You are mistaken, sirrah—What! Can it bribe a favourite to betray his prince, a senate their country, or a courtier his nearest friend—yet fail to tempt such fellows as jail-keepers to be perfidious to their trust?

Asp. One question more, Sir—Have you quite forgot Fidelia?

Sir Cha. The absence of an old mistress makes room for a new one—Therefore I have blotted her from my fancy, like a painter that strikes one form out of his cloth, to lay in another.

Asp. Sir, consider, and don't run headlong thus to your own destruction.

Enter Don Philip.

D. Phil. Aspin turning philosopher!

Sir Cha. Ay, Don Philip, my servant apes a philosopher, like a cobler that leaves his stall for a tub, and sets up for one of our reformed teachers.

D. Phil. Perhaps he fancies himself inspir'd, and thinks

thinks to deliver you by his inſpiration to another place—I'm ſure I'm ſorry to ſee you where you are.

Sir Cha. Don Philip you are happy in the affections of a fair lady—Therefore, let not your concern for me be an interruption in your pleaſure.

D. Phil. My miſtreſs and my friend ſhare my heart—and I can never rejoice in one, when I am concern'd for the other—Is there any thing I can ſerve you in?

Sir Cha. There is—You know I told you this morning I had ſtruck up a new amour—I can't tell you the lady's name, for ſhe's a ſtranger to me—But had I my liberty, I might have the happineſs of ſeeing her to-night.

D. Phil. Very well, Sir Charles—I find 'tis not in the power of fortune to reclaim you.

Sir Cha. No, faith; I am reſolv'd to overcome her ill-nature by laughing at it—And let what will happen, it ſhall never alter my humour, nor be an interruption to my pleaſures.

D. Phil. Very finely reſolv'd indeed—But ſuppoſe, Sir Charles, I ſhou'd gain you your freedom now, what ſecurity ſhall I have of your return?

Sir Cha. By the honour of an Engliſhman I'll return again.

Aſp.

Aſp. I hope he'll have more wit than to keep his word though. [*Aſide.*

D. Phil. Enough—Here, who waits there?

Enter Keeper.

D. Phil. D'ye know this ſignet?

Keep. Yes, 'tis my lord governor's.

D. Phil. I command you, by virtue of this, to ſhew that gentleman the ſame reſpect as to myſelf—Give him his liberty—I'll anſwer it to the governor.

Keep. I obey your orders.

Sir Cha. Here, take this for your civility.

Keep. Sir, I thank you. [*Exit.*

D. Phil. Now you have your liberty! You muſt take me along with you.

Sir Cha. No, I won't draw you into dangers—that wou'd be an ill return for ſo great an obligation.

D. Phil. That excuſe won't ſerve—I am reſolv'd to ſee this miſtreſs of yours, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Don't take it ill if I refuſe you—For even Pylades and Oreſtes had their ſeparate ſecrets—This lady is a woman of quality, and, ſhou'd I ſerve her ſo, ſhe'll reſent it.

D. Phil. How can you be ſatisfied ſhe's a woman of quality, if you never ſaw her face?

Sir Cha. Her manners and appearance are a convincing proof of that.

D. Phil. I thought, Sir Charles, you had known the ways of your own country better—Perhaps ſhe may be a courtezan.

Sir Cha. No, no, I am convinc'd of the contrary—Thoſe ladies are eaſily diſtinguiſh'd by their airs from women of quality—You may depend on it I am not ſo eaſily impos'd upon.

D. Phil. I won't preſs farther then againſt your inclinations—Good night; I'll ſee you again tomorrow! [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. So! Now fortune begins to turn her wheel—Some lucky ſpoke may riſe quickly to my advantage—Aſpin, lend me your piſtol for my ſecurity.

Aſp. Muſt I ſtay behind, Sir?—'Tis a ſervant's duty to follow his maſter's heels—Beſides, I don't like this place for an amuſement.

Sir Cha. Come along then—It grows late, therefore I'll take a ſhort turn, and wait for the happy ſignal.

SCENE,

SCENE, *The governor's house.*

Enter Leonora.

Leo. The invention of a wit, the courage of a knight-errant, and the conduct of a politician, are all comprehended in an adventurous lover.—First we lay the scene of an assignation; then enter into the part, and if caught in the action, have a thousand incidents to bring us off again.—I'm now assur'd, let what will interpose, love and resolution can never fail of success.

Enter Flora.

Is the coast clear?

Flo. Yes, Madam—The governor's gone to his repose.

Leo. Where's Fidelia?

Flo. In the same condition.

Leo. And Don Philip?

Flo. He's just come in, and retir'd to his apartment.

Leo. Are all the family at rest?

Flo. There's not one ſtirring in the houſe, Madam.

Leo. Then ſeek out for the cavalier. [*Exit* Flora. So! now I have nothing left me to fear, but a diſappointment from Sir Charles—Yet why that? We young girls can break the priſon of a father's houſe to fly to our admirers, therefore ſuch a gallant as he can never want a ſtratagem to releaſe himſelf—beſides, if Love's his guide, Fortune muſt be his aſſiſtant—but here they come.

Enter Flora, *and Sir* Charles.

Flo. Tread ſoftly, Leonora's in the next room undreſſing, and the governor lies near.

Sir Cha. Thanks to my ſtars, that thro' the folds of darkneſs, I'm come, at length, to the regions of light.

Flo. I'll retire, that I may give you notice if any thing ſhould happen. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. Egad, this girl's worth gold—ſhe knows civilly how to withdraw, and leave a pair of lovers together.

Leo. You're a fine courtier truely, to let a lady, when ſhe comes to ſee you, be carry'd away in captivity—I thought by this time to have heard that

that you had broke your priſon, ſlain your guards, and conquer'd whole armies to have gain'd my freedom—then you had been a lover indeed!

Sir Cha. Madam, I thought it wou'd be a much greater pleaſure in a happy meeting to compleat my bleſſing, than to turn mad-man, and be run thro' for aiming at impoſſibilities.

Leo. This is a ſatisfaction that every lover can give, becauſe 'tis a pleaſure to him—but your death wou'd have chronicled my fame in romance, to have been read by young virgins in after-ages, that ſuch-a-one lov'd me ſo, he dy'd for the ſake of me.

Sir Cha. Look'e, Madam, I am not ſo romantic as to die for the ſake of being read in a novel, to divert girls in the green-ſickneſs—My intention is to live for the end I was created, to propagate my generation — therefore, as I am a priſoner upon parole, and muſt return by break of day to the caſtle: let us reap the advantages of love, night, and opportunity.

Leo. A fine ſpeech indeed! you are like the atheiſt, all for pleaſures at the preſent, and never have a thought of futurity—I expected you wou'd have prov'd a Paris, at leaſt—that is, have prof-

fered to have carry'd me to a safe harbour, and there to have given yourself up for life, as a personal security for your love.

Sir Cha. For life—too much resembles marriage, which is the disagreeable part of love—besides, my honour's engaged for my return.

Leo. Love is the nicest point of honour—therefore the engagement is of greater force—but I know the reason why you are thus reserv'd—you have a pre-engagement on your heart.

Sir Cha. 'Tis true, I have lov'd another; but one love, like one power, yields to a superior.

Leo. Very well, Sir Charles, I see you are too inconstant to be trusted—for now, by your own confession, shou'd you see another, I must yield your heart to her beauty, because you may chance to think it superior to mine.

Sir Cha. Madam, that's impossible—for the charms of your wit so conspire with those of your beauty, that they must fix ev'n inconstancy itself.

Leo. I esteem such flights but as compliments, Sir Charles—and a compliment to a lady, like a poetical flattering panegyric, is the severest satire—for it shows the persons what they ought to be in the reverse of what they are.

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. What arguments can I then uſe to convince you of my affections?

Leo. None. I ſhou'd as ſoon take an atheiſt for a man of ſenſe; a wit for a politician; or a politician for a man of honour; as a libertine, like Sir Charles, for a lover.

Sir Cha. But, Madam, can you have ſo mean an opinion of your own deſert, as to believe a heart that has been your captive, can ever break your chains?

Leo. No! but you have been falſe already, and inconſtancy is as bad a proof of love, as ſcurrility is of wit—the one proceeds from a falſe genius, and the other from a degenerate paſſion.

Sir Cha. Come, this is trifling away the happy minutes. [*A piſtol fir'd.*] Ha!

Leo. What means that noiſe!

Sir Cha. This is certainly my dog of a ſervant!

Enter Flora.

Flo. Haſte, or you'll be diſcovered; the governor's riſing!

Sir Cha. Where ſhall I hide myſelf!

Leo. Alas! here's no conveniency—therefore, fly quickly!

Flo. If he goes out at the door, the governor meets him!—

Sir Cha. What shall I do then!

Lor. Jacomo, Pedro, lights there! [*Within.*

Leo. They're coming here!

Flo. Then there's no time to trifle!—Out, out of window, Sir, quickly!

Sir Cha. Out of the window! so, shall I break my neck, to preserve a lady's reputation.

Lor. Lights, lights there, quickly! [*Within.*

Leo. For heav'ns sake, Sir Charles, fly! for my honour, and your life!

Sir Cha. Fly! 'Sdeath, Madam, what do you mean? D'ye think I have wings like a Cupid to fly out of the window!

Leo. Your stay will ruin me, Sir Charles!—besides, you may safely get by a balcony, from my closet into the court-yard!

Sir Cha. This comes now of making ill use of one's time. Well, I must run the risque; but a pox on me, if ever I draw myself into these scrapes again. [*Exit.*

Leo. What course shall we take now?

Lor. Haste to my daughter's chamber there. [*Within.*

Some of you follow me, to search the court-yard.

Leo.

Leo. Hark! there are ſome of them coming here!

Flo. Nay, then, out go the lights—Now, perhaps, they'll conclude we are at reſt.

Leo. I ſhiver with apprehenſions—My father will certainly find Sir Charles or his man in the court-yard!

Flo. That we muſt leave to fortune, Madam—In the mean time, let us retire ſoftly, for fear we are diſcover'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir Charles *feeling his way.*

Sir Cha. Vexations are always the fruits of an intrigue—What ſhall I do? Where's my raſcally ſervant? The houſe is alarm'd, and I am in the dark within the verge of the governor's palace!

Enter Aſpin.

Aſp. I have rais'd the houſe with the report of my piſtol, and now ſecurity's the word—Odd, 'tis very dark—Every ſtep I have taken, I have knock'd my head againſt ſome poſt or wall, till I have almoſt beat out my brains.

Sir Cha. If I am not miſtaken, I hear the tread of a man.

Aſp.

Aſp. I warrant you now, my maſter is ſo full of his ſport with the lady, that he hears nothing of this diſturbance—Odd, I can but laugh to think how he'll look when he is catch'd in the nick of his performance.

Sir Cha. There's certainly ſomebody in this yard—If I don't take care, I may chance to loſe my life before I know where I am—therefore, old friend, ſtand to my aſſiſtance.

Aſp. Hark, I hear ſomebody—they ſteal ſoftly, thinking to catch me here before I am aware of 'em—Theſe Spaniards are damn'd fellows—they love to run a man through in the dark—Odd, I'll up with my heels, and truſt fear to be my guide—O lud, I am caught! Help! help!

[*Runs againſt Sir* Charles.

Sir Cha. Whoever you are, if you offer to ſtir an inch, you're a dead man. [*Draws.*

Aſp. Oh lud, Sir, ſave my life, and I'll peach—I'll tell you the whole plot.

Sir Cha. Oh! Is it your worſhip, Sir?—This is all owing to you, you raſcal.

Lor. Have you ſearch'd every place carefully? Follow me, ſome of you, to the court-yard. [*Within.*

Sir Cha. Egad the enemy will be at our heels preſently—Sirrah, march after me by the ſound of

of my tread—Ha! What have I ſtumbled againſt? A chair! It ſeems ſet in my way by fortune—Lights are coming—I'll in here, and hide myſelf.

[*Opens the chair.*

Aſp. Sir, let me come in too, for if I am taken, I ſhall either be hang'd like a dog, or knock'd o'the head like an ox.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, here's no room—therefore ſhift for yourſelf. [*Goes into the chair.*

Aſp. They're all coming; for heaven's ſake, let me ſit upon your knee, Sir.

Sir Cha. Get out you raſcal, I ſhall be diſcover'd by your folly. [*Shuts himſelf in.*

Aſp. This is very barbarous—I wiſh I cou'd find out a horſe-pond—I'd run up to my neck to ſecure myſelf—Here they come—If I am caught, I'll be reveng'd and peach, I'm reſolv'd. [*Exit.*

Enter Lorenzo, *and ſervants.*

Lor. Have you been at Leonora's chamber?

1ſt *Serv.* Yes, my Lord—and I believe ſhe's in her bed, for I ſaw no light.

Lor. I thought I heard ſomebody leap out of her window—Secure the gates.

Enter

Enter Don Philip.

Lor. Don Philip! Have you caught the alarm too?

D. Phil. My Lord, I heard a noiſe in my room, and came to ſee what's the matter.

Lor. We thought ſomebody had broke in—but we can find no one but our own family.

D. Phil. Have you made a diligent ſearch, my Lord?

Lor. We have ſearch'd almoſt every where—except any one's hid in that chair.

D. Phil. Give me the light, I'll ſee ——

[*Opens the chair*, *Sir* Cha. *nods at him to take no notice.*

Lor. Is there any one?

D. Phil. No, my Lord——Death and confuſion! Sir Charles there! [*Aſide.*

Lor. 'Twas a miſtake betwixt ſleep and waking—I'll retire to reſt again—A good repoſe to you Don Philip. [*Exit.*

D. Phil. The like to your Lordſhip.——So, they are all retir'd now, to their reſpective chambers—My Lord, would have perſuaded me this was an illuſion—So he thinks to deceive me, whilſt I deceive him—We wou'd both hide the diſgrace

disgrace from each other.———Hist, Sir Charles you may come forth now.

Sir Cha. Dear Philip thou art the best of friends.

D. Phil. Am I not? to be made a property to my own shame: Is this generous usage?

Sir Cha. What mean you?

D. Phil. You have supplanted me in Leonora.

Sir Cha. 'Tis a mistake — I came to a young Lady that's a prisoner—who was taken with me.

D. Phil. That's a poor evasion, and below a man of honour—I know the reason now, why you refus'd to admit of my company—besides, there's no such person in the house—Look'e, Sir Charles, I shall expect satisfaction.

Sir Cha. Look'e, you are mad — for jealousy is no other than madness — I tell you there is such a lady; perhaps you may be so blinded with love, that you may not regard any body in the family but the governor and his daughter—but if what I say is not true, to-morrow you shall have what satisfaction you require.

D. Phil. Till then farewel. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. Farewel, till you come to your senses again—So! I have brought myself to a fine pass indeed—I have kill'd one hot-brain'd fool for his jealousy, and now to compleat my misfortune, he too

too has catch'd the infection—What ſhall I do? If I ſtay here and truſt the inquiſition, 'tis ten times more unmerciful than a Middleſex jury—A man can never have fair play for his life — to touch cold iron, and come off like a gentleman—Shall I then lay hold on this opportunity, and make my eſcape! No! They ſhall never ſay an Engliſhman's ſo baſe a coward.

Let the hot Spaniard boaſt his virtue here,
And honour's loſs in jealous notions fear.
A Briton ſcorns to prove his country's ſhame,
And rather hazards life, than taints his fame.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The governor's houſe.

Enter Leonora *and Don* Philip.

D. Phil. COME, come Madam, I'm not to be ſo impos'd upon! you may deny it as long as you pleaſe, but you can't perſuade me out of my ſenſes —Did not I, laſt night, actually ſee Sir Charles hid under your window in the court-yard?

Leo. Suppoſe you did, Sir?——

D. Phil.

D. Phil. Then, Madam, I can ſuppoſe it to be no advantage to your character—S'death, am I to be made a property! a mere pander! to carry on an intrigue againſt my own honour?

Leo. Very well! go on, Sir, go on.

D. Phil. So I can, Madam. Is it prudent for a young lady, juſt upon her marriage, to entertain a cavalier alone at midnight — nay, in her own chamber too! unknown to her father, or any one that ſhou'd be the guardian of her honour?—Such conduct is mighty reputable indeed, Madam!———

Leo. Suppoſe ſuch a perſon was here, Sir — is there no other place that cou'd entertain him but my apartment?—Am I the only perſon he cou'd come to?—Muſt I be accountable for his being here?

D. Phil. No, Madam, by no means—'Tis probable to believe a perſon of his quality, might have an affair with one of your ſervants only—S'death, d'ye take me for a fool! is there any other young lady in the houſe? Look'e, Madam, I ſhou'd not ſo tamely take this of Sir Charles, but that I ſcorn to inſult a man in his misfortunes—however, I can be yet capable of reſentment—for know, I'll immediately demand my contract of your father, and return back to Madrid. [*Going.*

Leo.

Leo. If I let him go, this may give room for ſuſpicion, and ſuſpicion will bring a diſcovery. [*Aſide.* Hold, Sir—Not that 'tis worth my while to clear my innocence, for your ſake, but for my father's: Know then, here is another young lady in this houſe.

D. Phil. Aye! who? tell me that pray, Madam?

Leo. The priſoner, Sir—I ſhall have a fine time to ſatisfy your ſcruples.

D. Phil. The priſoner! ha, ha, ha! you are both in the ſame ſtory, I find—your ſcheme is excellently well laid—Were I a zealous dotard, or a Britiſh huſband, perhaps I might be credulous enough to believe any thing—but this deceit won't take; it won't, Madam.

Leo. How! what indecency have I been guilty of to merit this uſage?—but know, ſince you are ſtill reſolv'd to traduce my honour, there are thoſe, Sir, that will vindicate it—This is not to be borne with patience!

D. Phil. Nay, Madam, don't diſorder yourſelf thus—for you may henceforth meet Sir Charles as often as you pleaſe—and expoſe your reputation as much as you think fit; it ſhall never give me any further uneaſineſs I can aſſure you, Madam.

Leo.

Leo. Inſolent! before you had reſolv'd to treat me after this manner, you might, at leaſt, have aſk'd my father if there was no ſuch perſon in the houſe!—Is this the return for all his friendſhip? But here comes the lady herſelf, I ſhall leave her to give you ſatisfaction.—Provoking man! [*Exit.*

D. Phil. Ha! what do I ſee? Here comes a young lady indeed! I'm afraid jealouſy has carry'd me too far—Soft! I'll lay aſide this heat a little, if poſſible.——

Enter Fidelia.

But ſtill methinks my choler riſes ſo, I know not how to ſuppreſs it.

Enter Leonora, *and* Flora *behind.*

Leo. Here we may learn their diſcourſe. Methinks, tho' I am partly in fault, I am exaſperated at ſuch treatment.

Fide. Ha! who's here? What can be the meaning of this!

D. Phil. Nay, Madam, don't ſtart—I hope the ſight of me has not put you in a conſternation.

Fide. Sir, I came to meet a friend, and being loſt in thought, pardon me, if I was a little ſurpriz'd.

D. Phil. Madam, whoever you came to meet, and however ſtrange it may ſeem to you, you are the only perſon I cou'd wiſh for at preſent.

Fide. Me, Sir! I don't know that ever I ſaw you in my life before!

D. Phil. Very like ſo, Madam — But however you may be ſurpriz'd, you have been the cauſe that has rais'd this diſorder in my ſoul, and 'tis in your power alone to appeaſe it.

Fide. I the cauſe of your diſorder, Sir!—certainly the man's mad! [*Aſide.*

D. Phil. Pardon me, if my temper's a little ruffled. — Perhaps I may be impertinent — but if you have the leaſt compaſſion, I beg you anſwer me to one particular.

Fide. With all my heart, Sir, if it lies in my power.———What can the man mean! He looks as if he was diſtracted! [*Aſide.*

D. Phil. Anſwer me directly and ſincerely, Madam —for my ſcruples are of as great a conſequence, as thoſe of troubled minds, that apply to caſuiſts for eaſe.

Fide. Sir, you ſurprize me wonderfully——What ſatisfaction can I, that am a ſtranger, give you?

D. Phil. The greateſt! and only in one trivial anſwer.

Fide.

Fide. What is it, Sir?

D. Phil. D'ye know ſuch a perſon as Sir Charles Winlove, Madam?

Fide. How, Sir! your queſtion ſtartles me, indeed.

D. Phil. It need not; for, as I am a cavalier, I aſk you for no treacherous deſign — therefore be kind, and eaſe me with an anſwer.

Fide. How earneſt and concern'd he ſeems! Sure he has no deſign to offer love — Perhaps he may come as a ſpy to betray me — I know not what to think. [*Aſide.*

D. Phil. Madam, I conjure you by all the ſoftneſs of your ſex, to free me from my doubts—— for the whole quiet of my ſoul depends on what you ſay.

Fide. I will — whate'er the conſequence may prove, I leave to you—Know then, I ſcorn on any terms to deny my affection for Sir Charles.

D. Phil. This ſatisfaction cheers me indeed!—— Curſe on my jealous folly!—Are you a native of Valencia, Madam?

Fide. No, Sir, I am totally a ſtranger to it—— Love, that has been my guide to ruin, was my directer hither.—But now, Sir, anſwer me a queſtion

in my turn.——— Are you acquainted with Sir Charles?

Leo. Nay, if they come to particulars, we are loſt again. [*Aſide.*

D. Phil. Madam, I know him well—He is my deareſt friend.—How have I wrong'd him with ſuſpicions! [*Aſide.*

Fide. Your friend, ſay you! Can you give me any tidings of him, Sir?

D. Phil. I queſtion not, but he is return'd in ſafety to the caſtle—I am now immediately going to him about ſome affairs of conſequence; in the mean time depend on my intereſt to ſerve you both. [*Exit.*

Fide. In the caſtle! ſaid he ſo, or did I dream? Oh! for the wings of Love to haſte and be convinc'd. [*Going.*

Leo. So, here's another hare ſtarted—Where are you going in ſuch haſte, Fidelia? [*Comes forward.*

Fide. Madam, I hear that the cavalier, that I'm in ſearch of, is a priſoner in the caſtle; therefore, I muſt immediately fetch my VEIL, and haſten to ſee him. [*Exit.*

Leo. Now am I more unfortunate than ever!—What ſtop ſhall I put to this?

Flo. Madam, you muſt again conſult your wit: you ſee diſcoveries gather like clouds, and I'm afraid

afraid the main ſtorm will come rattling upon us immediately.

Leo. I was never ſo provok'd in my life, as I was at Don Philip's jealouſies, and all this I undergo for a perſon that I'm not ſecure of—For as Fidelia was the firſt object of Sir Charles's affections, ſhe'll ſtill be the miſtreſs of his heart—and poſſeſſion there, as in the law, will make her eleven points before me.

Flo. Then, Madam, in my humble opinion, 'twill be better to drop this amour—This lady will, in the end, diſcover all—therefore, I think it better to forſake a victory than to loſe it.

Leo. I am of the ſame opinion—But what ſhall I do in this affair?

Flo. E'en follow the example of declining courtiers—that is, whilſt you've poſſeſſion of his affections, think 'tis more honour to reſign than to be remov'd.

Leo. But I mean, now I have gone ſo far, how ſhall I retire without hazarding my reputation?

Flo. Shou'd you truſt his love, even the ſucceſs of your amour will be of ill conſequence—Therefore, appoint another aſſignation with him—let her into the ſecret, ſo far as not to give her uneaſineſs, and carry her with you to meet him.

Leo. Prudently advis'd—But ſee, ſhe comes: I muſt not let her go, for that will ruin all.

Enter Fidelia.

Are you reſolv'd upon this adventure, Madam?

Fide. Yes: now I know where Sir Charles is, methinks, I am all impatience to ſee him!

Leo. I'd adviſe you to apply yourſelf to ſecond thoughts, and ere you fix upon a reſolution, to weigh well the conſequence of this proceeding.

Fide. The conſequence!

Leo. Aye: conſider, you are no more miſtreſs of your liberty—but are here now in confinement.

Fide. In confinement, Madam! I deſire you to explain your meaning?

Leo. Then, in ſhort, to clear up the myſtery at once; my father is an intimate friend of yours—and for the ſake of that friendſhip, he has here engag'd to ſecure you.

Fide. Am I ſo barbarouſly betray'd then! I thought, Madam, I had come to the governor's daughter for refuge, and not to a priſon to be confin'd in.

Leo. I can't but make an allowance to your ſurprize — and, therefore, yield to your reſentment.

But

But I could wiſh, you wou'd make yourſelf a little eaſy—for, perhaps, I might yet propoſe a method for your ſatisfaction.——Ha! my father! for heaven's ſake calm yourſelf a little.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. What makes the lady appear in ſuch a diſorder, Leonora?

Flo. Now the cloud is gather'd, it begins to break before we are prepar'd for't. [*Aſide.*

Leo. A trifle only, my lord.

Fide. No, Madam, 'tis no trifle—My lord, I think I have reaſon to be ſo.

Lor. How, Madam!—I hope you have receiv'd no ill-treatment from any of my family.

Leo. The lady was going abroad without your leave, and I believe ſhe may take it ill, becauſe I told her the conſequence.

Lor. How, Madam! I am ſorry you ſhou'd be led into ſuch an error.

Fide. My lord, I confeſs a point of ceremony might have oblig'd me to have aſk'd your leave—but either there is a miſtake on your ſide; or if you rightly knew me, and the cauſe why I am here, I believe you wou'd not refuſe me.

Lor. 'Tis becauſe I know both, Madam, I do refuſe you—and tho' you may command what freedom you pleaſe in the houſe, I beg you ſtill to remember you're a priſoner.

Fide. A priſoner! Upon what account? By what authority, my lord?

Lor. Madam, my authority was never wont to be call'd in queſtion—beſides, I thought I had ſatisfy'd you as to that, when I ſeiz'd you yeſterday with Sir Charles Winlove.

Fide. Seiz'd me yeſterday with Sir Charles Winlove! What does your lordſhip mean?—In ſhort, I believe you're impos'd upon.

Lor. Madam, if my ſenſes are right, I am certain I am not impos'd upon—and you muſt pardon me, if I can't conſent to be ſo—Did not I bring you yeſterday here in cuſtody?

Fide. No, my lord: this lady and her ſervant, can witneſs I came here alone, and on my own accord.

Lor. To contradict the fair, may ſeem a breach of reſpect due to the ſex—therefore, I can make you no other anſwer than this, that when young ladies are in love, 'tis no wonder if they are thus forgetful.

Fide.

Fide. Madam, I desire that you'll speak, and satisfy my lord as to your knowledge in this affair.

Leo. Madam, you see my lord is already satisfy'd —Besides, since you are wound in the toil, I shan't draw myself into the snare to deliver you.

[*Aside.*

Fide. My lord, this is very hard, thus to be shut out of the light of reason, to remain in the darkness of mystery.

Ser. Come along there—bring him before my lord governor. [*Within.*

Lor. Ha! what new disturbance is this?

Enter servants with Aspin.

Asp. Gentlemen, dear gentlemen, don't collar me so furiously—consider, to choke a man without a halter is against law—besides, I am no Turk, and therefore am not ambitious of the honour of being strangled like a Grand Vizier.

Leo. Ha! 'tis Sir Charles's man—perhaps this may be of an ill consequence.

Lor. Let go your hold of him. What's the meaning of all this?

1st *Ser.* My lord, this is the fellow that made the disturbance last night—for, searching him, we found this pistol conceal'd in one of his pockets.

2d *Ser.*

2d *Ser.* My lord, we believe he came upon a very traiterous deſign—for we diſcover'd him hid under one of the maids beds.

Lor. A very pretty fellow indeed!—Take him away, I'll conſider of a puniſhment for the raſcal.

Aſp. This is an admirable place for law and diſcipline—Prieſts enjoin penance for lenten mortification, and judges hang folks without hearing their defence.

Lor. D'ye preſume to murmer in my preſence, ſirrah? What have you to ſay for yourſelf?

Aſp. Say! why nothing, my lord! I am unprovided with counſel, and therefore, my motion is, that I may defer my trial.

Lor. Prithee, fellow, anſwer me to the purpoſe—What are you?

Aſp. Not guilty, my lord; not guilty.

Lor. I mean, ſirrah, who are you? What's your buſineſs here?

Aſp. My lord, as to who I am, I am my maſter's ſervant; and as to my buſineſs here, if you don't like my company, I am ready to take my leave.

[*Going.*

Lor. Stop him:—I never ſaw ſo impudent a fellow before.

Flo.

Flo. They ſay, Madam, he's an Engliſhman's ſervant; but I'm ſure he has an Iriſh aſſurance.

Leo. Pray heav'n he has aſſurance enough to bring himſelf off; for I'm afraid this will open the ſcene, and immediately diſcover all. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Hark'e fellow—give ſome account of yourſelf; what profeſſion are you of?

Aſp. Why, my lord, I wait upon my maſter—In his chamber I'm his valet in ordinary; ſometimes his pimp in extraordinary; and commonly, have the honour to be of his cabinet council.

Lor. Thou art an excellent raſcal, indeed!—Prithee, fellow, who is your maſter?

Aſp. So! theſe great folks are as forgetful of every thing, as they are of their promiſes [*Aſide.*]—Is then my face a ſtranger to your lordſhip?

Lor. Sirrah, if you had gold enough in your pocket to anſwer the braſs of your countenance, you might outvie the moſt impudent courtier in Europe—but don't preſume to trifle with me thus any longer.

Aſp. Then to refreſh your memory, my lord, I am Sir Charles Winlove's ſervant, and your lordſhip's priſoner at diſcretion.

Lor. Ha! I had forgot the rogue, indeed!—So, Madam, does the ſcene now begin to open or not?

Fide.

Fide. My lord, I am innocent of the charge; and therefore, am satisfy'd this can have no relation to me.

Lor. 'Tis well, Madam; this will appear immediately.

Leo. I'm afraid, Flora, now comes the clue that will unravel the mystery at once. [*Aside.*

Lor. In the first place, rascal, what provok'd you to make such a disturbance?

Asp. Why, my lord, I was assaulted in your lordship's court-yard by a great mastiff, and I used that pistol as an instrument to allay his fury.

Lor. In the mean time, where was your master?

Asp. Only playing a game or two, with my lady, my lord.

Lor. Very well, Madam!—Go on, sirrah.

Asp. Nay, my lord, I know no more, than that he was carry'd away from me by a she-confident of the lady's, vulgarly call'd a chamber-maid.

Flo. Here's a treacherous rogue! [*Aside.*

Lor. How! Flora—did you conduct him to the lady's chamber?

Flo. I, my lord!—Certainly the fellow has not the impudence to say so!

Asp. Nay, I had not such cat's eyes to know any one in the dark; but methinks your voice agrees much

much with that pert lady's that brought the letter to my maſter.

Leo. So, this raſcal will betray all. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Then this was a concerted buſineſs, I find.—Sirrah, let me hear no more of theſe practices.—Diſcharge the fellow, and let him return to his maſter.

Aſp. So, they ſay, confeſs and be hang'd!—But I am come as clear off by turning evidence, as if I had bought off the verdict of a jury. [*Exit.*

Lor. So, Madam, I hope now you'll no longer deny your correſpondence with Sir Charles Winlove—But I am ſorry, for the ſake of my reſpect to your father, to ſee you ſtill ſo regardleſs of your honour.

Fide. My lord, believe me, I am innocent—and if Sir Charles has had any affair here—'tis with ſome of your own family.

Lor. I cou'd almoſt wiſh to be ignorant of ſuch convincing proofs in relation to this affair—but you muſt pardon me, if I grow now to be more cautious of your proceedings—Flora, ſhou'd I find you in the leaſt concern'd in this, you ſhall no longer remain in my houſe. [*Exit.*

Leo. Now is my time! [*Aſide.*]—Methinks your countenance, Madam, ſpeaks a ſurprize at theſe proceedings.

Fide.

Fide. I own I am ſo confus'd, that I ſcarce know whether this is reality, or an illuſion.

Leo. I ſee, Fidelia, you are a little acquainted with the artifices of love, tho' you are caught in the ſnare—Can't you dive into the myſtery of this?

Fide. An ignorant innocence is peculiar to our ſex! and to dive into myſtery, they ſay, is a ſin in any one but a brother of the profeſſion—therefore, I ſhall let it reſt, till it unravels itſelf.

Leo. Were I in your caſe, I ſhould rather be fired with a woman's curioſity, than be ſo unmov'd at the turns of my fortune.

Fide. I am already ſatisfy'd of my misfortunes; therefore, curioſity might betray me to a knowledge that, perhaps, wou'd heighten 'em.

Leo. Alas, Fidelia! I am in as great a concern as you are—for my quiet is equally at ſtake with yours—but if you will conſent to come into my meaſures, there is yet a way to make us both eaſy.

Fide. Propoſe it: for methinks I cou'd embrace any method that cou'd bring me to the ſight of Sir Charles.

Leo. Know then, my father has contracted me to one, who has all the qualities that can make him agreeable—notwithſtanding which, I have lately entertain'd the addreſſes of an Engliſh cavalier, who now proves to be the very ſame you were ſpeaking of.

Fide.

Fide. What! Sir Charles Winlove, Madam?

Leo. The ſame.

Fide. How! after having ruin'd me, can he be ſo perfidious to make his addreſſes to another!—Falſe man!

Leo. Alas, all men are the ſame, Fidelia!—In ſhort, they uſe us as children do their toys; are fond of us at firſt—but quickly neglect us to follow new fancies.—But to proceed—Yeſterday, I met this Sir Charles at his lodgings, where my father came, attended with officers, and ſeiz'd us together!—He was carry'd to the caſtle, and I was brought home conceal'd in a VEIL; where, by the circumſtances of the ſtory, I find he miſtook me for you.

Fide. Wou'd you be willing, Madam, to reſign your intereſt in Sir Charles, provided I would ſtand to the reſt?

Leo. Yes, Fidelia, you ſhall now ſee me throw off the ſoftneſs of a lover for the craft of a politician, to ſerve you—And as a firſt proof of my friendſhip, I'll write to him as from myſelf: Flora ſhall carry the letter; and if he can get his liberty, I'll engage he ſhall meet us in two hours at another place.

Fide. This is as I cou'd wiſh, Madam.

Leo.

Leo. One thing more.—I overheard your diſcourſe with that cavalier who is to be my huſband—I ſee his jealouſies are cur'd, and all points are now clear'd to my content.

Fide. Let us then be quick in our proceedings.

Leo. With all my heart—we'll now retire, and I'll write immediately to Sir Charles.——Flora, be ready within call to attend us. [*Excunt.*

Flo. So, my lady is now come off again to her ſatisfaction.—If our ſex were as prudent in reſolution, as they are quick at invention, they would not prove ſuch weak fools to the men.—However, I have learnt now, if occaſion ſerves, to carry on an intrigue of my own—for I find, tho' dangers happen from love, wit never fails to turn the tables upon fortune.

Thus, when from fate our diſappointments fall,
Woman's invention can o'ercome 'em all.

ACT

ACT V. SCENE I.

The governor's houſe.

Enter Lorenzo *and* Alonzo.

Lor. MY old friend, once more I congratulate your arrival to Valencia—You are come in good time to vindicate the honour of your family.

Alon. Come in a good time, ſay you! No, I am come in a very ill time, I can't ſo much as thank you for your civility.—Hark'e, prithee look in my face now—Am not I very much alter'd? Have not I ſomething very rueful in my countenance?

Lor. What makes you fancy ſo?

Alon. Becauſe, methinks, I am no better than a raven, I can croak nothing but bad news.

Lor. Come, come, be cheerful; all will go well again.

Alon. Yes, truly! all is like to go mighty well, indeed!—My ſon-in-law, that was to be, has been deſperately wounded; my daughter's run away, and my family's diſgraced for ever; and you expect me to be cheerful, do you!

Lor. Nay, but hear reaſon.

Alon. Nay, but I won't hear reaſon! What have I to do with reaſon, when I come in ſearch of revenge?—You ſay, you have 'em both in your cuſtody!

Lor. Suppoſe I have! You tell me the wounded cavalier is recovered, then what pretence can I have for detaining Sir Charles?

Alon. No matter, I'll conceal his recovery, and have the dog ſuffer for his death.

Lor. Fye! I am aſham'd to ſee your paſſion ſo overcome your reaſon—Suppoſe your daughter loves him?

Alon. Loves him! 'Sdeath, who doubts but ſhe does love him!—What, becauſe the ſilly baggage has been ſo weak as to ſuffer him to ruin her, you would have me play the old dotard, and be as great a fool as my daughter!

Lor. Still you miſtake me.—Why will you endeavour thus to widen the breach, when I wou'd bring matters to a reconciliation?

Alon. To a reconciliation!—Ha, ha, ha! this is pleaſant, indeed!—The ſon of a whore has ſtole away my daughter, and for ought I know, ſhe may have her belly up to her mouth; and you talk of bringing matters to a reconciliation!

Lor. But ſuppoſe ſhe ſhould love him; and he ſhou'd have an equal paſſion for her?

Alon.

Alon. Why then, my curſe be an equal portion for them both!

Lor. Perhaps, he would conſent to marry her.

Alon. Marry her! no, no, no! The young fellows of this age, are not ſuch fools as to debauch women, and afterwards to marry 'em.

Lor. Nay, but——

Alon. Nay, but I know what it is to be a young fellow! I tell you their vows always diſſolve with virginities, and when the fort's ſurrender'd, all former promiſes are void o'courſe.

Lor. There are, indeed, too many of the fair ſex in that unhappy condition: but why ſhould you judge ſo hardly of your daughter?

Alon. Why ſhou'd I not judge ſo? Did ſhe not run away with him? Has ſhe not a ſanguine complexion, and he a brawny back? Is ſhe not a promiſing girl, and he a ſprightly young fellow?—— Then, why may not my daughter happen to be with child?

Lor. Still you perplex yourſelf with fancied injuries only—Was ſhe ever looſe in her behaviour?

Alon. No, I always believ'd her to be a very modeſt girl: But now, ſhe has certainly taſted of the tree of knowledge—he has open'd her ſenſes, and enter'd her into her rudiments.

Lor. Did you ever love your daughter?

Alon. Yes, too well; tho' indeed, ſhe was a very good girl, and deſerv'd it—Nay, now I think of her, the tears of affection ſtill come into my eyes!

Lor. Indulge that tenderneſs, and reaſon will come o'courſe—D'ye think I am your friend?

Alon. How ſhou'd I know that? We were friends once, indeed!—That is, when we were young—Then we us'd to drink our bottle together, ruin'd as many girls, and made as many cuckolds as any rake-hells in Europe—But now, the ſcene is chang'd: you are my lord governor! time, abſence, and ſtate-affairs may have drove me out of your memory.

Lor. Come, you ſhall ſee I am ſtill your friend; have patience, and I'll endeavour to bring all to a right underſtanding.

Alon. Patience!

Lor. Nay, nay, ſuppreſs your choler, 'till you ſee whether you have reaſon for it—I'll now immediately go, and propoſe an honourable treaty to Sir Charles: in the mean time I beg you to retire, and not ſee your daughter 'till I return to tell you my ſucceſs. [*Exit.*

Alon. Your return will bring me a fine account of ſucceſs, indeed!—We men are certainly moſt unhappy

unhappy wretches—When we are young, we get children in the heat of our blood, who, when we come to be old, grow disobedient, and break our hearts in order to get into our estates—Well, I'll say no more, but I'll send this rebel daughter of mine to a nunnery, and there she shall mortify for the sins of the flesh—but for that rogue that has debauch'd her, if ever I see him again, I'll have his blood, tho' I meet him in a sanctuary. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The castle.*

Enter Sir Charles Winlove *and* Don Philip.

D. Phil. Sir Charles, I am now convinc'd of your innocence—My suspicions were the fond errors of my love, and as such I hope you'll esteem 'em.

Sir Cha. I do; when I consider that jealous eyes always see thro' a microscope, that magnifies the meanest trifles, to seem as of the greatest consequence — but had you not been my friend, I shou'd not so tamely have submitted to such usage.

D. Phil. I own the rashness of my folly to be great — Let fools have the obstinacy to persist in their errors—a generous soul esteems it rather as a point of honour, when convinc'd, to acknowledge 'em—Therefore, now let us turn the discourse—

I'll assure you, Sir Charles, I think the captive is very beautiful.

Sir Cha. Beautiful as ever I saw!

D. Phil. But still, methinks, my lady excels her.

Sir Cha. Every lover is apt to think his own mistress the most deserving—Mine has wit as well as beauty; and where the lusciousness of one may cloy the appetite, the other whets it again, and makes all her charms as agreeable as ever.

D. Phil. Wit and beauty are two irresistible weapons, indeed; but, I find, you are in a fair way to succeed in your hopes.

Sir Cha. No, faith — Notwithstanding she has so many perfections, my success was but very indifferent: whether the inconstant star that governs the sex rul'd, I know not; but my reception prov'd as great a disappointment, as the accident afterwards did a surprize.

D. Phil. Oh! that was a meer feint, only to make a trial of your love! I find you are not rightly acquainted with the variety of a lady's humour.

Sir Cha. No, nor ever shall, if 'tis so much addicted to whimsey.

D. Phil. But a lover shou'd make it his business, first, to study the temper of his mistress, and then to study every method that may promote her pleasure.

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. Then I am not ſo much a lover as to ſubmit my reaſon to frenzy—For to ſtudy the temper of a woman, is like ſearching out for the philoſopher's ſtone—a man may ſpend his eſtate, run mad, and grow never the wiſer.

D. Phil. Notwithſtanding your harſh cenſure of the ſex, I wiſh I knew the humour of my lady, ſo far as to gain remiſſion for my folly.

Sir Cha. So, this is ever the conſequence of jealouſy — Firſt, you quarrel with your miſtreſs for no reaſon, and then are never eaſy till you're reconcil'd.

D. Phil. I own it is a weakneſs, indeed; but a Spaniard is ſo unfortunate in his paſſions, that he can no more avoid the raſhneſs of jealouſy, than he can expel the heat of his climate.—But what ſervice, Sir Charles, can I do you now in your amour.

Sir Cha. Why then, once more to truſt you as a friend, I have this day receiv'd a letter from the lady:—but ſure there are ſuch beauties in the ſtyle! not Ovid is more ſoft, nor Horace more ſatirical.

D. Phil. What are the contents of it?

Sir Cha. 'Tis a kind invitation to another appointment; but interſperſed with reflections from an excellent talent of wit in relation to my ſervant's

careleſſneſs:—Here, prithee read it, and give me your opinion.

Enter Aſpin.

So! Where have you been, ſirrah?

Aſp. Sir, I have run thro' as dangerous adventures as a knight-errant—but as I was predeſtinated to act the part of champion, I was prepar'd with armour accordingly.

Sir Cha. Were you ſo? Prithee, let's hear the wonderful deſcription of it.

Aſp. Why, Sir, courage was the ſupport of my back; caution the defence of my breaſt; wit was my noble head-piece; and this piſtol, the weapon with which I encounter'd death and deſtruction.

Sir Cha. That piſtol, ſirrah! What occaſion had you laſt night to make it give ſuch an alarm?

Aſp. Why, Sir, I was aſſaulted by no leſs than a fiery dragon—In ſhort, a great maſtiff flew at my throat, and had I not had the courage to have encounter'd his fury, I had certainly been torn in pieces.

D. Phil. Nay then, Sir Charles, you muſt never be angry with him for his valour—Aſpin has now rival'd the fame of St. George—and I think his ſtatue ought to be ſet up in memory of this atchievement, as a ſecond honour to your country.

Aſp.

Asp. What is past, was but a trial for the courage of a hero—But the next misfortune I fell into, requir'd the deepest policy of a statesman.

D. Phil. Aye! prithee what was that?

Asp. I was this morning discover'd by some of the servants, and carry'd, *vi & armis*, a prisoner before my lord governor.

Sir Cha. Aye! How came you off there, Aspin?

Asp. Oh, Sir, I brought myself off with a wet finger!—First, the governor ask'd me several questions—I generously told him the affair you had last night with the lady—confession merited mercy, and I was immediately discharged like a man of honour.

Sir Cha. Were you so, sirrah? Know then, rascal, you have discover'd all my designs, and I'll this moment make an example of you——

D. Phil. Hold, Sir Charles—consider, his folly is below your resentment.

Sir Cha. I have scarce patience to suffer the dog in my sight—Rascal! deceitful villain!

Asp. Is this the return for all the dangers I have suffer'd—Well, 'tis an ungrateful age—but I am not the first man of merit that has been slighted after his faithful service.

D. Phil.

D. Phil. Come, be pacify'd, Sir Charles—all may be eaſily brought off again.—Here, take your letter: I have read it, and approve of the deſign.—But have you prepar'd any place for your appointment with the lady.

Sir Cha. No, as to that part, I believe, I muſt rely upon you.

D. Phil. Then I can help you at a dead lift—My apartment has a door into another ſtreet—Order her to be carry'd the back-way, and as ſhe's a ſtranger to the place, ſhe may be eaſily deceiv'd.

Sir Cha. I like the propoſal well.—Aſpin, go you this moment and conduct 'em.

Aſp. So, tho' we men of merit are ſo barbarouſly us'd, we are always wanted in a caſe of neceſſity.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, no prating; mind what I ſay, and go out of my ſight. [*Exit* Aſpin.] Now which way ſhall I obtain my liberty for this adventure?

D. Phil. Oh, I'll gain you that freedom—and that you may the better by day-light paſs unknown, I'll ſend you my cloak, and you ſhall muffle yourſelf in that—Ha! the governor! What means this?

Enter

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. Don Philip, I ſee your friendſhip is not like that of the world, a meer counterfeit profeſſion—for you endeavour to ſerve the perſon you value, tho' you ſee him loaded with affliction.

D. Phil. My lord, friendſhip is only ſhew'd in adverſity: a man in proſperity has abundance of profeſſors—but had he need of one, not a friend amongſt 'em all.

Lor. Your friendſhip is mutual—Sir Charles ſav'd your life, and you'd now return it with the preſervation of his—ſo that you both are exceptions from the general rule of the world; for there's ſcarce a perſon in it, beſides yourſelves, can ſay, I have a friend.

Sir Cha. Becauſe the reverſe of friendſhip is the product of a degenerate age; where honeſty paſſes for folly; perfidiouſneſs for good policy; and all manner of knavery, for neceſſary wiſdom to thrive in the world.—So that a man can no more be aſſur'd of friends in adverſity, than a king or country in diſtreſs—when thoſe that ſhou'd be ſo, enrich themſelves in their deſtruction.

Lor. You are a young Stoic indeed, Sir Charles—However, I come now to ſtand your friend, for want

want of pity, in your caſe, wou'd be downright cruelty—and therefore, give me leave to make ſome propoſals that may be to your ſatisfaction.—Don Philip, I hope you'll excuſe me a little.

D. Phil. My lord, I take my leave——Hark'e, Sir Charles, what ſhall I do in this affair? [*Aſide.*

Sir Cha. Go, and detain the lady till I come—and d'ye hear, leave orders with the keeper for my freedom. [*Aſide.*

D. Phil. Never fear—I'll manage all to the beſt advantage. [*Exit.*

Lor. I have this morning receiv'd advice of the cavalier's recovery, that was thought to have been kill'd—This I muſt yet keep as a ſecret, till I have brought matters to bear. [*Aſide.*

Sir Cha. Now, my lord, if you pleaſe, I am ready to receive your propoſals.

Lor. Sir Charles, I am come to you concerning an affair of conſequence.—You muſt know, Alonzo, the father of Fidelia, and I, when young, were never ſeparated from each other—Now, I underſtand by a letter from Madrid, you have lately depriv'd him of his daughter.

Sir Cha. How! depriv'd him of her, my lord!

Lor. Aye; but methinks I would willingly heal this breach—therefore I'd adviſe you to find ſome means,

means, by which you might reconcile yourself to him, and restore the honour of the young lady.

Sir Cha. My lord, I understand you not—'Tis true, I love Fidelia as my life; but for her honour, it is not in the least forfeited on my account.

Lor. Her father is of a quite contrary opinion.—Therefore, if you have either a value for yourself, or an affection for the young lady, you will consent to those means, that will contribute to her ease, as well as to your own security.

Sir Cha. My lord, I own the wildness of my youth.—But I have so true an affection for Fidelia, that for my security, I prize it not in comparison with her content.

Lor. I see, Sir Charles, you begin to guess at my meaning—Therefore I question not but to find you the man of honour, I was apt at first sight to believe you—Her fame upon your account is very much become the discourse of the world—therefore to reconcile all, wou'd you be willing to accept her for a wife.

Sir Cha. My lord, I needed not this preparation to embrace such welcome proposals.

Lor. Consent to that, and I'll engage your pardon shall be secur'd.

Sir Cha. My life is of as little value to me now, as when I ran the risque of forfeiting it for her—

But

But for the looſer wiſhes that my inconſtancy has been guilty of, cou'd I be ſo happy to ſee her, they wou'd immediately vaniſh at her ſight.

Lor. Know then, Sir Charles, the lady is ſtill in Valencia.

Sir Cha. How! in Valencia, my lord?

Lor. She has remain'd in confinement at my houſe, ever ſince I yeſterday ſeiz'd her at your lodgings.

Sir Cha. Nay, then there is a miſtake in this—The lady that was taken with me, I can aſſure you, is not Fidelia.

Lor. Her father's ſervant cou'd not be miſtaken, and he afterwards ſaw her at my houſe.

Sir Cha. I know her face too well to be deceiv'd—The lady that was taken with me, I was a ſtranger to.

Lor. This is a pretty contrivance indeed!—In the firſt place, the young lady owns herſelf to be Fidelia, but at the ſame time denies a correſpondence with you—and now you own a correſpondence with her, but deny ſhe is the perſon—Who was it then that you had an aſſignation with laſt night at my houſe?

Sir Cha. Since you have made a diſcovery in that affair, 'twas with the lady that was ſeiz'd with me.

Lor.

Lor. And that lady, you positively say, is not Fidelia?

Sir Cha. I do, my lord, and if I am in my senses, I am sure I can affirm it.

Lor. Now she actually says she is—but denies that she has either seen you, or had any discourse with you in Valencia.

Sir Cha. Nay, then there is a farther mystery in this!—I am certain, the lady I met last night was not Fidelia.—Now if the person you mean, that denies all this, shou'd prove to be her, then your lordship is mistaken, for she can't be the same that was seiz'd with me.

Lor. Nay, there has been no art magic to transform her, nor to change one person to another.—Therefore depend on't, she's the same—Now the messenger from her father went away satisfy'd she was the right; and she, upon examination, own'd herself to be so.

Sir Cha. This makes it all seem more intricate still.

Lor. Come with me, and let your sight convince you.

Sir Cha. By this he'll discover the lady is gone abroad, in order to meet me.—What can I do? I must submit. [*Aside.*

Lor.

Lor. Come along then, Sir Charles—methinks I am impatient to have this riddle explain'd.

Sir Cha. And I the like, my lord — for I am ſure, as the ſtory lies now, there is ſo great a myſtery in it, 'tis beyond the power of a churchman to unfold it, till we ſee farther. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *Don* Philip's *apartment in the governor's houſe.*

Enter Aſpin, Fidelia, *and* Leonora VEIL'D.

Aſp. So, this is the firſt time that ever I turn'd gentleman-uſher—Methinks I make a notable figure in my preferment—Nay, I don't know, but I may riſe to be a great man. [*Aſide.*

Leo. The creature looks as if he was in love with himſelf—Hark'e, fellow, where have you brought us?

Aſp. Not a jot from your own inclination, I ſuppoſe — Look'e, Madam, it is maſter's buſineſs to anſwer your queſtions—Here my ſervice is at end—Methinks, I begin to have a jantee air already—I'll ſee how I can compliment [*Aſide*].—Ladies, I am your moſt humble ſervant, and ſo I take my leave of ſuch illuſtrious beauties. [*Exit.*

Fide. I never ſaw ſuch a coxcomb in my life!

Leo.

Leo. Now we may venture to UNVEIL — for I know not where we are, by reaſon I never look'd out of the chair.

Fide. Perhaps Sir Charles may have provided us one of his miſtreſs's apartments — for I know not what to think of him, now he's grown ſo inconſtant.

Leo. Sure I'm no ſtranger to this place, Fidelia.

Fide. They ſeem to be handſome lodgings, and metair'ks are very prettily furniſh'd.

Leo. Ha! I am ſurpriz'd!

Fide. At what, Madam?

Leo. As I live, we are betray'd!

Fide. How! heaven forbid!

Leo. We are in my father's houſe, and this is Don Philip's apartment!

Fide. If ſo, here's treachery indeed! What ſhall we do?

Leo. Nay, now here's a more convincing proof; this is the very door that opens into one of my rooms!

Fide. Then, Madam, our reſolution muſt be quick as our thought; for they'll certainly be here preſently.

Leo. Oh, for a ſtratagem now to outwit 'em— Stay, I'll look thro' the key-hole, and ſee if I can diſcern my ſervant.

Fide. Is there any body to be ſeen?

Leo. Yes, there's Flora working with her needle at the window.

Fide. Call ſoftly, Madam; perhaps ſhe may hear you.

Leo. Flora, hiſt, Flora!—Don't you hear?

Flo. Who calls? [*Within.*

Leo. 'Tis I — Fetch the key that belongs to the door, and open it.

Flo. It lies, Madam, on your father's table — I'll run and fetch it immediately.

Leo. Now we ſhall ſucceed, and every thing will be right again.

Fide. Madam, 'tis all too late — ſomebody's coming up.

Leo. Ha! 'Tis Don Philip! Aſſiſt me wit now, or never—Keep cloſe your VEIL, Madam.

Enter Don Philip.

D. Phil. What do I ſee, Leonora here!

Leo. Seeing this lady in your apartment, Sir, I came to keep her company till you cou'd come according to your aſſignation.

D. Phil. Say rather, Madam, that you came to meet Sir Charles Winlove — that this lady is the confederate of your falſhood, and that you have miſtaken this apartment for another.

Leo.

Leo. How, Don Philip! I never saw such assurance in my life!

D. Phil. Madam, I find my suspicions are not so groundless as I just now believ'd 'em to be—But you shall see my good-nature is not to be impos'd upon.

Leo. So! this is excellently fine indeed!—first, to bring strange ladies to my father's house, and then to turn the fault upon me.

D. Phil. Why, Madam, can you deny that this lady came here with you?

Leo. Yes, Sir, I can—You know, that she did not.

D. Phil. Nor did not you come here to meet the English cavalier?

Leo. I won't satisfy you, Sir.

Fide. Sir, what have you done? I expected Sir Charles here; and instead of that, you are come and have incens'd the governour's daughter to my ruin.

D. Phil. Ha! then I have been too rash indeed!—I find now, that this is the lady I look'd for, and jealousy has brought Leonora hither. [*Aside.*

Leo. So, his countenance tells me, he begins to soften to my wish—I see her stratagem has took. [*Aside.*

D. Phil. What ſhall I ſay to her? [*Aſide.*] Madam, I find already I have been in an error in my ſuſpicions, but not in being falſe myſelf.

Leo. So! now you ſee your aſſurance won't take, you'd endeavour to conceal your falſhood.

D. Phil. Madam, I can immediately clear myſelf of that—for to ſatisfy you who this lady is—

Leo. Oh, Sir, I am not ſo paſſionately in love, as to deſire ſatisfaction.

Enter Flora *through the other door.*

Flo. Madam, I cou'd not find the key before, or ——

Leo. Hiſt, Flora; no more!

Flo. I find I ſhall do miſchief if I talk.—Madam, your father's coming with another cavalier.

D. Phil. Prithee, Leonora, hear me juſtify myſelf.

Leo. No, I'll relate it all to my lord, and as I never lov'd you, ſhall be glad of this opportunity to be rid of you—Excellently come off! [*Aſide.*

Enter Lorenzo, *Sir* Charles, *and* Aſpin.

Lor. Ha! what's the matter daughter?

Leo. My father and the Engliſh cavalier! I am certainly betray'd again. [*Aſide.*

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. His daughter! I am ſtrangely deceiv'd then—for I am ſure this is the lady that was taken with me. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Speak, Leonora.

Leo. Your lordſhip ſhould aſk that gentleman, who makes private aſſignations, and brings ſtrange ladies to your houſe.

Lor. How, Don Philip!

D. Phil. Pardon me, Sir Charles, for impeaching you—But egad, all muſt out—This lady is the captive, and came here to ſee my friend, who was to have met her by ſtealth.

Sir Cha. That lady the captive!—Now wou'd they, tho' I ſee her in my preſence, perſuade me I am blind, and change her to another perſon.

Lor. Sir Charles, you ſeem ſtill to remain in the dark—Pray, Madam, UNVEIL—Now is it Fidelia or no?

Sir Cha. Ha! I am thunder-ſtruck!—Sure 'tis the fond error of my eyes!

Lor. What ſay you now, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And yet, methinks, I cannot be deceiv'd—Is it my Fidelia then?

Fide. Oh, Sir Charles!

Sir Cha. It is, it is!—The muſic of her voice informs me now 'tis ſhe!—Oh, my Fidelia! let

me fly with joy into thy arms, and breathe my ſoul upon thy lips.

Fide. Long have I wiſh'd, Sir Charles, for ſuch a happy meeting! — but paſt misfortunes wou'd be an unwelcome theme — your love will recompenſe 'em — Be conſtant for the future, and 'tis all I aſk.

Sir Cha. No chance, but death, ſhall ever part us more! — Sure I am loſt in tranſport and ſurprize! — Oh, my Fidelia! methinks I cou'd repeat thy name, till diſtant waters catch the charming echo, and when they rowl high in their mountain-waves, reſound it to the ſkies!

D. Phil. Nay, amongſt all your adventures I think I never ſaw you in ſuch raptures before.

Sir Cha. Pardon me, friends, if all my ſenſes are o'ercome with joy and admiration!

Lor. This is pleaſant indeed! Sir Charles—that you ſhou'd contrive to ſee the lady, and yet not know ſhe was here before.

Fide. My lord, Sir Charles is a cavalier for the ladies—and ſuch ever eſteem ſecrecy as a point of honour: — therefore, you muſt excuſe him for his reaſons.

Sir Cha. Ha! now I begin to underſtand this myſtery!—Fidelia has given me a hint of my inconſtancy—

conſtancy—but I muſt conceal my affairs with the other lady from the company. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Is the riddle explain'd to your ſatisfaction, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. It is, my lord.

Leo. So, I ſee he has taken the hint—Well, tho' I have loſt my lover, I ſhall preſerve my honour, that's one comfort. [*Aſide.*

Aſp. Now, I believe by the joy of my maſter, and the humour of this company, that all is like to go well:—if ſo, 'tis the firſt good accident that ever I knew a woman the occaſion of. [*Aſide.*

Lor. Now, to add to the pleaſures you receive—know, I have this morning had notice from Madrid, that the cavalier who was thought to have been kill'd, is perfectly recover'd of his wounds.

Sir Cha. This is happy indeed!—for methinks, my Fidelia, I would not have the ſtain of blood ſully my character, nor a melancholy thought amidſt the joys of love.

Lor. Sir Charles, you muſt grant me the favour of ſolemnizing your marriage at my houſe, with theſe that are to be coupled alſo.

D. Phil. Shall I then, Madam, have the happineſs of a reconciliation at laſt?

Leo. Aye, Don Philip—for as this affair has been carry'd on by quarrels, I think it may naturally end in marriage.

Fide. Now there is nothing wanting, to compleat our bleſſing, but a reconciliation with my father.

Lor. That, Madam, I hope is in my power to gain you; for know, that the lord Alonzo is now in my houſe.

Fide. What! in Valencia, my lord?

Lor. Yes, Madam—but here he comes!—retire at a diſtance, and you ſhall ſee me break this affair to him.——

[*The company retire to the back-part of the ſtage.*

Enter Alonzo.

Lor. So, my lord! I have ſeen Sir Charles Winlove, according to my promiſe.

Alon. Well, and what does he ſay? How does he behave himſelf?

Lor. As I expected, my lord.

Alon. As you expected! Humph! that is, I ſuppoſe, you have told him the news of the cavalier's recovery; and now he very peremptorily bids defiance, and intends to march off with my daughter.

Lor. Still you won't comprehend me.

Alon. Lord, I tell you, I do comprehend you! Don't I know that he is a very bloody-minded fellow? Has he not ſtole away my daughter, and for ought I know rifled her of all?—and this I can't comprehend, forſooth!

Lor. You won't hear me——.

Alon. Nay, I tell you, I do hear you—but I'll not be ſo impos'd upon I am reſolv'd—A pen and ink there! Since the law won't do me juſtice, I'll write the dog a challenge, and you ſhall be the bearer.

Lor. A very pretty office for a magiſtrate indeed! but ſuppoſe he ſhou'd ſubmit to your own terms?

Alon. Why let him—My terms are ſword and piſtol, tell him ſo!—Odd, tho' I am an old fellow, I can ſtill take a breathing upon occaſion.

Lor. Nay, ſince I can't ſatisfy you myſelf, I have another card to play.—Come forward there.

[*The company approach, Sir* Charles Winlove *and* Fidelia *kneel.*]

Now will you be brought to reaſon?

Alon. Ha! what's the meaning of all this?

Lor. Speak to him, Madam.

Fide. My lord! conſider I am your daughter, and forgive my weakneſs.

Alon. Humph!

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. My lord, we only want your bleſſing to compleat our happineſs!

Alon. My bleſſing!—Why, I was talking of cutting your throat you dog:—and now inſtead of tilting, you aſk me for my bleſſing.

Lor. Sir Charles has had an honourable affection for your daughter; and he only wants your conſent to make her his wife.

Alon. Make her his wife, ſay you!—Is he in earneſt?

Sir Cha. My lord, I am.

Alon. Nay then, take her with all my heart—Riſe, daughter, I forgive you, and heaven bleſs you both.

Lor. Now, 'tis as it ſhou'd be.

Alon. Aye, and ſo it is—Since he makes her his wife, I am very well ſatisfied!—Buſs me daughter, and you too Sir Charles—and now we are all friends again.—But I did intend to ſend you a challenge, faith—however, inſtead of puſhing at me in a duel, turn your weapon upon my daughter, and make me a grand-father—d'ye hear?

Lor. Why, that's well ſaid!—But won't you take notice of the reſt of the company?

Alon. Aye, with all my heart—Who are they?

Lor.

Lor. This is my daughter, and this my ſon-in-law that is to be.

Alon. Is this your daughter?—Faith, ſhe's very pretty!—Madam, by your leave [*Salutes her*].—Well, ſince we are all reconcil'd, old friend, let's have an entertainment ſuitable to this occaſion.

[*A dance, after which they come forward.*]

Sir Cha. [*To the governor.*] My lord, I thank you for the favours that I here receive.—And now, my Fidelia, I begin to be ſatisfy'd, that true happineſs only conſiſts in a retirement from the follies of the world.—And your conduct has ſo far converted me from a looſe opinion of your ſex, that I ſhall ever think

No joys on earth can with chaſte love compare,
And, beyond riches, prize a virtuous fair.

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MISS LINDAR.

WELL! as I'm champion for young Bayes's play,
Take care, good people, of the words you ſay!
For If I like 'em not, I ſhall abuſe you!
And were I big enough—I wou'd ſo uſe you!
What have I ſaid? You laugh at my behaviour,
And think me yet too young to aſk a favour.
Faith now I'm cool again, I think ſo too!
What did our author then intend to do?
I muſt confeſs, I'm angry at th' abuſe——
To ſend me here, to make his play's excuſe!
Why, what a piece of folly has he ſhown?
He ſhou'd conſider I'm not yet full grown!
If I had reach'd my teens, or ſomething nigh,
I ſhou'd have been well pleas'd my ſtrength to try!
Howe'er gallants, I yet believe — a kiſs
Might bribe the boldeſt—ſurely none wou'd hiſs!
Nay, as it is, you each muſt ſtand my friend,
If youth's a fault, I ev'ry day ſhall mend;
For here you know, like gard'ner's forc'd endeavours,
We ſprout apace! and ſoon may grant you favours—
And when I'm ripe, I find it in my nature
To be a very eaſy loving creature!

I wou'd do much to gain your future graces—
Come! let me ſee a ſmile upon your faces!
If you once think to put on frowns to fright me,
I'll be reveng'd, and die a maid to ſpite ye.

[*Runs off.*

SIR

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACTED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN DRURY-LANE,

IN THE YEAR 1724,

BY HIS MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium, parit!

TERENT.

O fœlix hominum genus!
Si vestros animos amor,
Quo cœlum regitur, regat.

TO

HERBERT TRAST, ESQ.

PAST

CITY OF [illegible]

[illegible]

I HAVE [illegible] custom to ask [illegible] indirectly; but [illegible] in this [illegible] for [illegible] digestion.

If [illegible] to what the world [illegible] a feast of past favours [illegible], before future [illegible], have the justest title to this Dedication from me, were

TO

HERBERT TRYST, ESQ.

OF THE

CITY OF HEREFORD.

SIR,

I HAVE been told, 'tis a cuſtom to aſk permiſſion for ſuch kind of addreſſes; but there is ſomething ſo very mean in this civility, to aſk your pardon for neglecting it, were to deſerve your indignation.

If merit ought to be preferred to what the world calls greatneſs; if a ſenſe of paſt favours ſhould be conſidered, before future views; you, Sir, have the juſteſt title to this Dedication from me, were

were the play a performance more worthy your acceptance.

Had other authors the knowledge and experience of your virtues that I have, I ſhould find many rivals, when I beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf,

SIR,

Your devoted,

Humble ſervant,

RICHARD SAVAGE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE importunity of the Publiſher being very preſſing, I omit the Preface, which I intended; wherein I propoſed, by way of Eſſay, A DISCOURSE ON TRAGEDY: the ſubject being too copious to treat of, in this ſhort time, I defer it, either to publiſh it ſingle, or to join it with ſome other work.

But my gratitude prompts me to declare the obligations I have to my beſt and deareſt friend, Mr. Aaron Hill, for his many judicious corrections in this Tragedy. On that worthy gentleman, whoſe mind is enriched with every noble ſcience, and in whoſe breaſt all the virtues of humanity are compriſed, it will be my pride, to offer my ſentiments in a more diſtinguiſhing manner hereafter.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I think it my duty alſo, to return thanks to the town, for their favourable reception of this play; and for the applauſe their indulgence beſtow'd on the performance of the young actors: particularly, for my own ſucceſs, in a double capacity, as actor and author, I ſhall ever publickly confeſs their generoſity, as it will ever prove my ſecret ſatisfaction.

Notwithſtanding the diſadvantage this play may have received in the repreſentation, I cannot omit acknowledging a debt of gratitude to Mr. Theophilus Cibber, who was very careful in the management of the rehearſals, and endeavoured to inſtruct every one concerned in the play; a mechaniſm, which my inexperience, as an actor, made me incapable of.

Though an author knows the meaning of his ſcenes, he may be unacquainted with a theatrical method of ſetting them in the moſt advantageous appearance. Example enforces precept:

precept: and therefore, Mr. Cibber, junior, took the nobleſt method to improve others, by doing juſtice to his own character; and, though he labours under the preſent diſadvantage of ſmall ſtature, I cannot help concurring with the opinion of many others, that in action and elocution, he is certainly a prodigy!

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY AARON HILL, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MR. CIBBER, JUN.

NEW to the ſtage—by no paſt praiſes fir'd!
Young, and unfam'd, and but by hope inſpir'd:
Raiſe us to reach that hope's ambitious call,
Or with ſoft pity, break our threaten'd fall.
Small tho' our merit be, your minds are great,
And undeſerv'd applauſe may worth create:
Sweetneſs ſits ſmiling, where the heart beats true,
And they praiſe moſt, to whom moſt praiſe is due.

Low let me court ye to befriend our cauſe!
If juſtice pleads not, generous pity draws.
In a full world, our author lives, alone
Unhappy!—and, of conſequence, unknown:
Yet, amidſt ſorrow, he diſdains complaint;
Nor languid, in the race of life, grows faint.
He ſwims, unyielding, againſt fortune's ſtream,
Nor to his private ſuff'rings, ſtoops his theme:
Adopts the pains which others undergo,
And, for your pleaſure, feels not his own woe.

They ſhou'd themſelves be pleas'd, who love to
pleaſe;
And he who fears not mis'ry, merits eaſe.
Oh!—ſave unfriended virtue from diſtreſs—
'Tis the divine prerogative—to bleſs!

Sad,

Sad, for the tragic ſcene, your hearts prepare,
Where love kills friendſhip, and awakes deſpair;
Where cheriſh'd miſchiefs tow'r above controul,
And warring paſſions rend the tortur'd ſoul!

Taught by the pict'ur'd woes, which weep to-night,
Let long-weigh'd caution guide your wiſhes right:
Slow, thro' your eyes, give ſmiling ruin way;
Love, by that paſs, but enters to betray!
Beauty fades faſt—nor will it's tranſient grace
Sooth the ſick boſom, when the thought takes place.

But when twin ſouls each other's tranſport claim,
And pant and burn, and twiſt their ſtruggling flame,
Safe let 'em meet, by no falſe fears oppreſs'd;
Form'd to be one, and, till rejoin'd, unbleſs'd!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Earl of Northampton,	Mr. Bridgwater.
Earl of Somerſet,	Mr. Cibber, jun.
Sir Thomas Overbury,	Mr. Savage, the author.
Sir Gervas Elloways,	Mr. Keith.

WOMEN.

Lady Frances Howard, niece to the Earl of Northampton, formerly wife of the Earl of Eſſex, divorced from him, and afterwards married to the Earl of Somerſet,	Mrs. Campbell.
Iſabella, an orphan, under the guardianſhip of the Earl of Somerſet, in love with Sir Thomas Overbury,	Mrs. Bret.
Cleora, confident to the Counteſs of Somerſet, ſecretly a friend to Iſabella,	Mrs. Daviſon.

Officer, guards, and attendants.

SCENE London.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Earl of Northampton *and Sir* Gervas Elloways.

Nor. HOW cheerfully hath this day's light broke forth!
The new riſen ſun, dreſt rich in orient beams,
Beholds, with triumph, the late wife of Eſſex
Tranſplant her beauties, from his barren ſhade,
To flouriſh by the heat of love and Somerſet.

Ell. Never ſhall I forget the tempting bride!
Such dazzling luſtre ſparkled from her eyes,
That the proud gems ſhe wore ſhone dim beneath 'em;
Inviting warmth glow'd lovely on her cheeks,
And from her tongue flow'd ſuch melodious ſounds,
That liſt'ning rage grew gentle as her accents,
And age was youth again by looking on her!

Nor. Yet, tho' her features are as ſoft as air,
Strong paſſions urge her mind to manly daring!
Work'd up by nature with unuſual ſtrength,
Vengeance, ambition, and the warmth of greatneſs
Swell in her ſoul, and lift her above woman.

Ell. That Overbury, who oppos'd this marriage,
Will frown on its concluſion—He's your enemy!

When corresponding with the court of Rome,
'Twas he who intercepted dangerous letters.

Nor. He did, nor think that I forget he did it:
My genius, baleful as a comet's blaze,
Hangs o'er his head, and burns with red revenge!
Nay, he's my rival too!—That fiery thought
Glows in my breast; and as I weigh my wrongs,
I swell like Ætna, when her sulph'rous rage
Bursts o'er the earth, and rolls in floods of fire.

Ell. Your Isabella, Somerset's fair charge,
Is sure an abstract of divine perfection!
While Overbury's love, like a black cloud,
Cuts off, and intercepts the glittering prospect.

Nor. O! name it not—it must not, shall not be!
Old as I am, I'll snatch the pleasure from him;
And love and policy shall join to crush him.

Ell. You know her charms are Somerset's disposal.
Warm in the lustre of our late Queen's graces,
'Tis strange, to mark the power of time to change us,
Her father shone the favourite of the court:
But when his day of hope at length declin'd,
Drove by his enemies he fled to Scotland,
Pin'd there, and, chill'd with sorrows, died an exile.

Nor. 'Tis well—but I have news more worth relating!
Wade, the lieutenant of the Tower's displac'd.

Ell.

Ell. May I remind your lordſhip of a promiſe?

Nor. Thou needſt not, Ell'ways, I ſo truly prize thee,
That were my mind big with my country's fate,
With plots, which known, would blaſt my life and honour,
I ſhou'd, I think, unfold 'em to thy friendſhip—
Of that hereafter—See, the bride approaches!

[*Exit* Ell.

Enter the Counteſs of Somerſet.

Nor. Hail, to thoſe charms! that ſmile upon the morn,
And ſweetly gild it, like a milder ſun!
May joys, in circles, dance away your days!
And length of years ſuſtain your bridal pleaſures!
Fair Somerſet! now happy too, and great!
Bleſt with perfection to the height of thought!
The worth that could deſerve beauty like your's,
Inſures ſoft bliſs, and heaps long life with pleaſure.

Count. Thus—while a lover, talk'd my Somerſet,
His words fell ſoft like hov'ring flakes of ſnow,
And in cold tremblings melted on my boſom!
But now, alas!——

Nor. You cannot, ſure, ſuſpect him!

Count. He has alarm'd

A pride

A pride that catches the firſt ſpark, and kindles!
To be forſaken, is a thought of horror!
Oh! it wou'd grate the woman in my ſoul,
To have my pride ſubdu'd and make me mad!
Tho' but laſt night our nuptials fix'd him mine!
Starting this morning from my ſlighted arms,
Thought ſeem'd to preſs his mind, ſighs heav'd his boſom,
And, as repenting of his wiſh poſſeſs'd,
Full in the bluſhing dawn, he roſe and left me.

Nor. There is a damp, I know, that clouds his joys,
A vapour, which your warmth might ſoon diſperſe.

Count. What points my uncle at?

Nor. I'll ſpeak it plainly——
Overbury!——
That reſtleſs foe of ours—your huſband's friend!
This morning is expected.

Count. Overbury!
Then aid me indignation—rage—and vengeance!

Nor. Wiſely, you call on rage for its aſſiſtance;
Juſtice would be too ſlow for your revenge,
And conſcience bids us give it up for ever!
But what is conſcience?—a thin empty name,
That terrifies, like ghoſts, by fancy rais'd.
Ev'n the moſt brave uſe ſtratagems in war;
And what are plots againſt a private foe,
But ſelf-defence?—the firſt great rule of nature!

Count

Count. My lord, I ſee to what your counſel leads me!
I am a woman! nay, a woman wrong'd!
And when our ſex, from injuries take fire,
Our ſoftneſs turns to fury!—and our thoughts
Breathe vengeance and deſtruction!

Nor. Spoke like yourſelf!

Count. Oh! I'm tranſported with inſpiring heat!
You know I never lov'd the Earl of Somerſet,
'Twas intereſt, 'twas ambition won me to him;
And there's one thought, I own, has rack'd my peace,
The only one I e'er conceal'd from you.

Nor. Inſtruct me—It may ſerve us as a plan,
From which I'll raiſe a pile of tow'ring miſchief,
Shall nod with watchful horror o'er his head,
'Till, tumbling, it ſhall cruſh him into ruin.

Count. Know then, with ſhame I ſpeak it, I have lov'd him!

Nor. Lov'd whom?—not Overbury!

Count. Yes! lov'd him, more than I deteſt him now!
Each thought, look, geſture has confeſt the folly!
Nay, I have wrote—O heav'n! I know not what!
Reaſon was fled!—and every thought was madneſs!
And now he may betray me!

Nor. May! he will——
Theſe letters muſt be artfully won from him:
Succeeding, we ſtir Somerſet againſt him;

Revenge, with transport then, would sweeten all
The rage of slighted love—urge that discreetly:
I know the temper of your lord—'twill fire him!—
Touch but that point, and jealousy pleads for you—
But mark! he comes, and seems amus'd and pensive:
'Tis fit we part—anon we'll fix our scheme.

[*Exit* Count.

Enter Earl of Somerset.

Som. A kind good-morrow to my honour'd uncle!
Now fortune seems to smile in earnest on me;
This last night's blessing crown'd my warmest wish,
And kindling fancy from the thought takes fire!
Oh! my good lord! language gives way beneath it,
The painter's colours, and the poet's art
Cou'd touch but a faint image of my joys.

Nor. And yet, if I mistook you not, at entrance,
Your looks were low'ring, and your bosom labour'd!
Thro' the gay smile of your dissembled joy,
I saw th' obscuring shade which wrap'd your soul.

Som. Sure, you mistook!—I think I was all rapture!
How I adore your niece—be witness, heaven!
Witness ye soft desires! that swell my veins,
And beat but to the music of her love——
Dearly I love her! to distraction love her!

Nor

Nor words can ſpeak — nor thought can feel my
paſſion!
But—Oh! Northampton!
Nor. Speak.
Som. I have a friend
Dearer than life! and, as my honour, precious!
Our wiſhes and our intereſts are the ſame!
Friendſhip has join'd us in ſo ſtrict a band,
As if one parcel'd ſoul inform'd us both!
Yet he———
Nor. Let not his partial hate of her perplex you!
A wife becomes the trueſt, tend'reſt friend,
The balm of comfort, and the ſource of joy!
Thro' every various turn of life the ſame.
For men, they are not as they were of old—
Oft their profeſſions are the arts of intereſt!
You'll find the friendſhip of the world is ſhow,
Mere outward ſhow! 'Tis like the harlot's tears,
The ſtateſman's promiſe, or falſe patriot's zeal,
Full of fair-ſeeming, but deluſion all.
Som. Not ſo — then might I think you not my
friend!
Shall I, becauſe I live in faithleſs times,
Diſtruſt a virtuous man? or ſhou'd I ſlight
A faithful fair-one, 'cauſe her ſex are falſe?
If theſe are maxims, ties can bind no more!

All

All that is human is for ever loſt,
And brutes are e'en as we are.
Nor. Come, my lord!
This Overbury! he's the thorn that galls you!
Truſt me, I know him well — he has a ſoul
Too hárſhly form'd for ſuch endearing friendſhip.
Som. Greatly you wrong him! I have found him tender
As firſt-made mothers to their erring infants.
Firm to his prince, and faithful to his country;
A braver ſubject England never boaſted,
Nor man a nobler friend than Overbury.
Nor. Can he be juſtly call'd your nobleſt friend,
Yet ſacrifice your bliſs to private malice?
Let not a ſhow of friendſhip make you wretched,
Nor break the bands which heaven and love have made.
Som. Know you, my lord, ſo little then of Somerſet,
That you can wrong him with ſo poor a thought?
My wife! to tell you but how much I love her!
'Twou'd, like eternity, admit no end.
Nor. I've done — your ſafe diſcretion be your guide. [*Exit.*
Som. A wife! a friend! Oh! they include all joys!
And love and friendſhip are ſo near a-kin,
They ſhou'd, like poetry and muſic, join!

Each

Each form'd to grace the other—Why, then, in me,
Why, in my breaſt, ſhou'd friendſhip jar with love?

Enter Sir Thomas Overbury.

Som. Fly to my arms—Welcome as eaſe to pain,
As health to nature, or relief to want!

Over. O Somerſet! engraft me on thy boſom!
Each day of abſence ſeem'd a ling'ring age!
But I have haſted e'en to out-ſtrip time!
Left the dull hours behind me as I flew,
And reach'd the goal of all my wiſhes here.

Som. Friends, who thus meet, poſſeſs ſo ſoft a bliſs,
That none, but thoſe who taſte, can gueſs our joy.

Over. May ours live to the laſt verge of being!
Nay, ev'n in death! for then, if thought remains,
Shou'd mine but meet a ſoul in worlds to come,
Whoſe generous flame ſublim'd it from the reſt,
I ſhou'd be apt to call it—Somerſet!
But tell me—for my mind has dwelt upon thee,
Has thy fond heart regain'd its liberty?
Does the late Eſſex yet appear herſelf?
Or art thou ſtill bewitch'd with her inchantment?

Som. Alas! thou know'ſt not what a lover feels.

Over. Have I a ſoul for friendſhip, not for love?

There's

There's one who knows my ſoftneſs but too well!
Knows how her beauty fires! her virtue charms me!
Eſſex, I ſee, ſtill hangs her witchcraft round thee.

Som. Wou'dſt thou but view her with impartial eyes!

Over. Why, I confeſs ſhe's fair; and when ſhe talks,
Inchanting ſoftneſs melts upon her tongue,
And flows in ſeas of miſchief!—She has beauty,
Which ſpreads and blooms like a freſh-opening flow'r!
But poiſonous adders lurk beneath its ſtalk:
And from ſuch briars ſhoots this lovely roſe,
It wounds the touch which it invites to crop it.

Som. But let me beg thee, if thou lov'ſt thy Somerſet,
If friendſhip makes my peace of mind thy care,
No more to ſhock me on this tender point.

Over. 'Twere flattery all, not friendſhip, to comply!
The wound can ne'er be cur'd that ſhuns the probing!
Kind is the hand that wipes the duſt from virtue,
And counſel is a friend's peculiar office.

Som. Truſt me, my friend, that counſel comes too late.

Over. Hear me!—for, as I love thee, I will ſpeak!
What tho' her outward charms attract the eye,
Virtue, the gem within, is long ſince faded!
Her fame, like fleſh that blackens in the ſun,
Is blown and bloated by the breath of thouſands,
Now,

Now, as a man, weigh well ere you reſolve,
For when a woman's reputation's gone,
All that repenting virtue can inſpire,
Can never fix it in its ſtate again.

Som. Cruel report, I know, has wrong'd her worth!
Envy ſtill feeds upon the faireſt fruit,
And ſpreads its poiſon on the wings of virtue;
It blinds ev'n Overbury to accuſe her.

Over. My lord, my lord, I am no ſtranger to her!
Her trial with her late wrong'd huſband, Eſſex!
Her looſe pretenſions for that wiſh'd divorce!
I know it all!—and, by my ſoul, I think,
Dear, as I love thée, could'ſt thou ſtoop ſo low
As to receive that wanton to thy arms,
'Twould ſhake my friendſhip ſo—I could not ſcorn thee—
But ere I'd ſee thy ſhame—I'd range the world,
And leave thee to the ruin thou'rt ſo fond of!
Should'ſt thou!—Alas! what mean thoſe ſtarting tears,
Big drops of ſweat—dead paleneſs—trembling limbs!
Signs of ſome ſtrong confuſion!

Som. O my friend!
I muſt not—cannot hide a thought from thee!
She, from whoſe charms your friendſhip wou'd diſſuade me,
Is now my wife!

Over. Your wife?

Som. My much lov'd wife.

Over. Oh! what are men who love!—My lord,
I've done!
One ſigh to friendſhip only—and no more!
All thoſe convulſive ſtarts that ſhock thy frame,
Were the prophetic warners of my fall.

Som. Said'ſt thou thy fall! fall firſt a thouſand
Somerſets.

Over. That I ſtill love thee—witneſs this embrace!
Witneſs theſe tears!—but from this fatal hour,
Join'd, as you are to her—we part for ever.

Som. O ſtop—repent—recall thoſe haſty words!
What! part for ever!

Over. For ever our alliance, not our love.

Som. I fear I have no friend—but Overbury.

Over. You have a wife, and friendſhip is her office!
It ſtings my ſoul to ſee thee thus betray'd,
And my foreboding heart e'en bleeds with pity!
All that is left me now is to avoid thee,
And not to ſee, what but to hear will kill me.
Farewel, my lord—may ceaſeleſs bleſſings wait you.
[*Exit.*

Somerſet *alone.*

Som. Sorrow, eternal ſorrow claims me now!
All happy fortune flies for ever from me!
Whate'er's

Whate'er's worth wiſhing for on earth, I've loſt.
Life is a dream, diſturb'd by conſtant cares,
And he, who is not lov'd, finds death a bleſſing.

Friendſhip's dear ties for generous ſouls were made,
When they relax, black woes our peace invade!
Friendſhip from every ill can life defend,
Our guardian angel's but a faithful friend. [*Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I. CONTINUES.

Iſabella, Cleora.

Cleo. WHY, Iſabella, are theſe ſighs of ſorrow,
While crouding joys invite your blooming youth?
Love rears a thouſand little tender fears,
Fate, with a ſmile auſpicious, bids you hope;
To fear is to diſtruſt a power ſupreme,
The watchful guard of virtue in diſtreſs.

Iſa. Have I not cauſe to fear a thouſand ills?

Cleo. No! your lov'd Overbury comes to cheer you,
Then let weak malice work up threatning miſchief,
Soon ſhall the fairy ſtructure melt away:
Tho' Somerſet's new bride tries every wile
That ſlighted love, to hatred turn'd, can practiſe,
Her ſoul's chief ſecrets ſhe unfolds to me,

As I to you diſcloſe 'em.

Iſa. Kind Cleora!
Our friendſhip grew and ripen'd with our years!
When forc'd to loſe thee at my father's death,
How mournful was our parting. I bleſs'd the chance,
When I beheld thee, with my guardian's bride,
Companion of her hours.

Cleo. Of me no more:
Now let your Overbury fill your thoughts,
And every accent ſwell with ſounds of love.

Iſa. Oh! my Cleora! he will ne'er be mine;
A dreadful dream, laſt night, has warn'd my ſoul:
Love had, methought, ordain'd our nuptial rites;
But ſudden, while before the prieſt we ſtood,
A low'ring cloud hung o'er the temple's roof,
And, with ſlow horror, ſpread a fleecy darkneſs.
From its black center burſt a rattling ſhower,
Th' lab'ring air groan'd big with rolling thunder,
Red, thro' the gather'd gloom, flaſh'd lightnings broke,
And the rent veil let in a dreadful glare,
Which, with portentous quiverings, gleam'd upon us!
The altar totter'd—and the lights grew dim—
A hollow wind ſigh'd cold—and from their graves
Pale ghoſts ſtalk'd ſhadowy, and ſcream'd hideous round me.
But oh!—around my love fierce brightneſs glitter'd,
A fire,

A fire, triumphant, curl'd about his form,
And, winding upward, ſnatch'd him from my ſight.

Cleo. Yet he's not loſt—See! where he ſmiling comes!
Let me not ſtay to interrupt your joys. [*Exit.*

Enter Overbury.

Over. O take me, take me, to thy heav'nly boſom!
Here let me pour out all my hoarded thoughts!
Here tower my joys! my cares be here diſpers'd!

Iſa. I have a thouſand tender things to ſay!
A thouſand doubts at once to be reſolv'd!
Three tedious months have heavily roll'd on,
And not one thought, perhaps has chid thy ſtay:
But while thy voice ſo ſweetly ſtrikes my ear,
My joys revive, and melt away my ſadneſs.

Over. Let my ſoul bleſs the muſic of thoſe words!
My heart breaks rapt'rous at the ſoftning ſound!
I feaſt my famiſh'd eyes upon thy ſmiles!
I touch thee—and am loſt in extaſy!
A tide of thrilling joys flows thro' my veins,
I pant with pleaſure, and I burn with love.

Iſa. I cannot, if I wou'd diſguiſe my thoughts,
'Tho, 'tis perhaps, a fault to look thus kindly:
But, oh! beware! for thou haſt dangerous foes!
Beware, Northampton, who pretends to love me!

Beware the woman who deludes thy friend!
Watchful, I ſtrive to counterplot their miſchief,
And guard thy virtue from impending danger!

Over. Oh! thou rich ſource of everlaſting pleaſure!
Virtues riſe mix'd, and ſparkle in thy ſoul:
One glittering charm purſues another's ſhine,
As while I cut thoſe ſeas which brought me near thee,
Sweet ſun-reflecting waves roll'd glaſſy on;
And this no ſooner kiſs'd the ſhore, and dy'd,
But a new follower roſe, and ſwell'd as lovely.

Enter Northampton.

Nor. Why ſtart you, Madam,—at a lover's preſence?
Unveil your clouded beauty—ſince, this morning,
A ſmiling ſon looks gay on our friend's nuptials.

Iſa. My lord, I want the courtier.

Nor. Not the woman!
I ſee a too-ſucceſsful rival near you——
Sir, I ſhou'd ſpeak you welcome—You are happy—
But, Madam, ſince your charms may be neglected,
For boys, unſkill'd, find gems, whoſe worth they know not!
When ſuch your fortune proves, think of Northampton,
And ſmile, tho' late, on one who lives to love you.

Over.

Over. My lord, this injury but provokes my ſcorn,
The next may move my anger.

Nor. Am I threaten'd?
Away—thou buzzing inſect of the court!

Ove. Reproaches are too mean for brave mens anger,
Or I could ſting thy arrogance with talking!
Be wiſe! nor urge my ſword againſt thy meanneſs,
Worn for a nobler quarrel.

Nor. Sir, 'tis well!
When we meet next, what now remains to ſay,
May be debated.

Over. At your ſpeedieſt leiſure. [*Leads off* Iſab.

Northampton *ſolus.*

Nor. Well, Overbury,—thou doſt right to ſpurn me!
If plots have power, if oaths have force to cruſh thee,
If there's a magic ſpell beneath the moon,
Or poiſon can be drawn from baneful plants,
Then horror, from my fury, light upon thee!

Enter Counteſs of Somerſet.

Count. My lord, I know not if I'm yet betray'd!
My foe ſhot by me with a gloomy brow,
Nor bow'd his head in paſſing.

Nor. Saw you your lord?
Count. I did; and ſtrangely mov'd!
The uſual ſweetneſs of his nature's loſt,
With folded arms he traverſes the room,
Now red!—now pale! big on his wat'ry eyes
Prompt tears ſtand trembling—ſpeak to him, and he ſighs!
Or ſhakes his head—and groans an hollow anſwer!
Then, on a ſudden, ſtarts!—and flies obſervance!
Nor. Now is the time to fire him to our purpoſe!
Their friendſhip broke, I have a further plot—
Ere night this Overbury ſees the Tower.
Count. Wolſey nor Burleigh ne'er projected better.
Nor. Haſte we to execute reſolves of weight.
An active fire ſhou'd quicken vaſt conceptions!
For, when delay's cold influence chills our ſchemes,
Some adverſe fate comes, like a furious blaſt,
And kills 'em ere they ripen into action.
Count. O! I can match thee with an equal flame,
Not e'en the ſoldier's fury, rais'd in war!
The rage of tyrants when defiance ſtings 'em!
The pride of prieſts ſo bloody when in power!
Are half ſo dreadful as a woman's vengeance.
Nor. 'Tis a warm thought, and fires the mounting ſoul!
Revenge dares ſtrike at every thing——
Rivers of blood mark out her ſmoaking way!

And

And kingdoms flame to give her triumphs luſtre!
Welcome, dread vengeance!

Count. Let the prieſt-ridden vulgar worſhip virtue!
Thou, virtuous Overbury, ſleep, and dream!
Dream of philoſophy, and puzzling honour!
Of heavenly viſions, and immortal ſhadows!
Till flow revenge leaps ſuddenly upon thee:
Then ſtart!—behold who ſtrikes! and ſo expire!

Nor. Soft! the earl comes!—be on the niceſt guard!
Prove thy ſucceſs but vaſt as are thy wiſhes,
Thy name ſhall ſwell on fame's immortal voice,
A wonder among women! [*Exit.*

Count. He comes!—now aid me, all my ſex's falſhood!

Enter Somerſet *muſing.*

Som. They ſay, our thoughts diſtinguiſh us from brutes!
Wou'd I had never thought!—I had then been happy!
Reflection rivets woe upon the wretched!
Thought teaches me to feel a friend's loſt worth!
When we have friends, to them we truſt our griefs,
Our care lies lighten'd, and the mind ſleeps calm:
To me, that comfort's loſt!—I have no friend!
Oh! I cou'd pine away this wretched life!
Lean, like a willow, trembling o'er a brook!
Sigh with the winds! and murmur with the ſtream!

Count. His heart ſeems preſs'd with care. [*Aſide.*

My

My gentle lord,
Why leave you thus the gaiety of friends?
And why has grinding grief uſurp'd your ſoul?

Som. I found myſelf diſorder'd, and I left you—
Oft am I thus—leave me, I'll ſoon return.

Count. Oh! my dear lord, I am not ſoon deceiv'd,
Thoſe care-bent brows ſuit not a bridegroom's face!
Are folded arms the geſtures of delight?
Or theſe ſad groans the voice of inward joy?
No, no—conſider, I am now your wife!
'Tis mine to eaſe your cares, and bring you comfort!
If you have ſorrows, I muſt claim my part;
I ſink not ſoon beneath a weight of woe—
If you deny me this, you love me not.

Som. Not love thee! ſayſt thou? Oh! thou ſoul of Somerſet,
Cou'd thoſe bright eyes be turn'd into my breaſt,
There wou'd you ſee how your ſuſpicion wrongs me!
Let me look nigh!—let me gaze here with wonder!
Where's friendſhip now? Why, reaſon yields to beauty!
What tho' the crimes, of which her foes accuſe her,
Glar'd, broad as day-light, on my ſtartled ſoul,
Angels play ſmiling in her wanton eyes,
And lend an awe to lightneſs—love reigns round her,
And when ſhe ſpeaks—the ſofteſt, ſweeteſt muſic
Melts in her voice, and charms away my grief.

Count.

Count. Oh! with what art you ſooth my fainting ſpirits!
Then I am ſtill your dear, your much-lov'd wife—
Why do I aſk? thoſe eyes confeſs I am!
But tell me—for you ſhou'd impart your cares—
Why are you thus?

Som. Oh!

Count. Nay, again you're cruel!
Still when I ſtrive to ſearch the cauſe, your voice
Sinks from the point, and anſwers with a groan.

Som. What cauſe?—I told thee I had been diſorder'd—
Thy fears are the wild coinage of thy fancy,
A ſubtle ſelf-tormentor!

Count. 'Tis well, my lord!
I gueſs to whom I owe my loſs of power;
You have a friend can tell you tales of honour,
And teach you how to triumph o'er a wife,
Who has, indeed, had faults—but whoſe chief crime
Is loving you, perhaps, with too much fondneſs.

Som. What doſt thou mean?—what friend?

Count. Why, Overbury!
I know your tutor chides your faulty conduct!
Go then, and make your peace—be meekly penitent,
Promiſe to err no more—and he'll forgive you.

Som. Hear me, ſweet tyrant!—By my life, I ſwear
Thou'rt dear to me, as crowns to the ambitious!

Dear

Dear as these eyes, which tremble on thy charms,
Or, as this heart, which aches with joy and anguish.

Count. Then I must tell you, Sir, your friend's a villain!

Som. Have a care!
Let not thy rage transport thee to detraction.

Count. Oh! were I but to speak his base attempt!

Som. What base attempt!

Count. No matter what it is:
I, sure, may be allow'd some secrets too.

Som. Nay, this is wrong!—to brand him first with villain!
Then, in a dusky phrase, elude the charge!
Truth seldom lies conceal'd in mystery,
Clearly to reason she reveals her light,
And errors vanish, like a mist, before her.

Count. Why—what if he design'd against my honour?

Som. Your honour! 'tis impossible!——

Count. Form all that treacherous guilt wou'd dare to act,
And sum it up in this pretended friend.

Som. I prithee, do not make me mad!—speak plainly!

Count. Knowing your passion, he durst urge his own—
He told me you were false!—designing—jealous!—
Try'd every art of treachery to supplant you;

And

And when he found his wiles were unſucceſsful,
Attempted force, and threaten'd me with ſlander.

Som. Force!—Slander!—thou haſt warn'd me!—
think once more!
He cou'd not be ſo baſe!

Count. He was.

Som. Impoſſible!——
Ere yet my fury mounts into a blaze,
Ere I upbraid him with theſe black deſigns,
I charge thee do not tax him wrongfully,
For thou may'ſt open ſuch a ſcene of horror,
'Twill ſhake thee to behold it!
Dare you confirm it with an oath?

Count. I will.

Som. Nay, but weigh well what you preſume to ſwear!
Oaths are of dreadful weight—and, if they're falſe,
Draw down damnation—thoſe who murder fame,
Kill more than life-deſtroyers—Think again!
For, at that day, when each muſt ſtand arraign'd,
Their lots will fall in the ſevereſt fires.

Count. By all my hopes,
What I have ſaid——

Som. No more—I muſt believe you—
Believe you, ſaid I! what muſt I believe?
If you prove falſe!—if you traduce my friend!
And wrong my faith! may ſorrow blaſt thy beauties!

May conſcience riſe in all her dreadful triumph!
Scare every ſenſe! and ſtrike thee with diſtraction!
Yet, ſure thou'rt true! thoſe eyes which ſhine ſo ſweetly,
Can wear no duſky ſtain of barbarous falſhood!—
What then muſt Overbury be? Reflection
Sickens with doubt, and dies in dark confuſion.

Count. My lord——

Som. Thou need'ſt not ſpeak—I ſaid I would believe thee;
Thou art my life, the fountoin of my joy!
Yet, let me think!—Force!—Slander!—yes, 'tis ſo!
He's falſe! he's falſe!—Curſe on all treacherous friends!

Count. Nay, but I meant not thus to fire your anger,
Forget a friend's firſt falſhood.

Som. Never! never!
No—tho' this day was vow'd to peace and love,
Tho' crowds of noble gueſts have grac'd my joys;
Nay, tho' the king ſhould add his ſacred preſence,
My fury brooks no ſtay—my fame! my honour!
Both are concern'd, and rouze my ſoul to vengeance.

Enter Northampton.

Nor. Why are the bride and bridegroom thus retir'd?
Crouds of all ranks preſs in to join your pleaſures!
And every inſtrument of muſic vies

To

To ſound ſweet notes, and ſwell the hours of love.

Som. Alas, my lord! even harmony grows harſh!
Thought's out o'tune, diſcord has ſtruck my ear,
And my ſoul jars within me.

Nor. What's the cauſe?

Som. 'Tis a vile world, Northampton!
The oaths of friendſhip, like thoſe made to girls,
Are meant but to betray, and broke o'courſe.

Nor. This I knew well before——but who has
wrong'd you?

Som. The darkeſt of all villains—a falſe friend!
But as I am a man, I will revenge it!——
Oh! what a change has my poor heart ſuſtain'd!
But a few moments ſince, this man's lov'd memory
Sat ſoft, as brooding halcyons, on my ſoul;
Now my rouz'd rage cou'd hunt him in full ſcent,
Till his laſt duſt were ſcatter'd in the air,
And driven like chaff before the angry wind.

Nor. My lord, this ſeems th'extravagance of paſſion!
When anger ruſhes, unreſtrain'd, to action,
Like a hot ſteed, it ſtumbles in its way!
The man of thought wounds deepeſt, and ſtrikes ſafely;
Premeditation makes his vengeance ſure!
And levels it directly to the mark.

Som. I cannot, like a courtier, kill with ſmiles!
My fury ſcorns to glow, conceal'd in embers;

No;

No; it ſhall blaze abroad with flaming luſtre!
If I muſt fall, why I was born to die,
And fall as a man ſhou'd—If I revenge me,
I right my injur'd honour, as I ought.

Nor. My lord, this ſtream muſt have another courſe:
This Overbury——

Som. Saidſt thou Overbury!
Now, by my ſoul, there's magic in the name,
And my charm'd rage grows ſtill as midnight ſilence!
Why wou'dſt thou ſpeak it?—Let me not dwell upon him!
Talk of falſe friendſhip! of abandon'd honour!
Of hate! revenge!—diſtraction!——
But ſpare that name—at which my fury melts,
Or guilt will ſmile, like ſweet-ey'd innocence.

Count. My lord, I wiſh you cou'd ſurmount your anger.
'Tis nobler to forgive, than to revenge.

Som. Doſt thou plead too!—why—he has wrong'd thy fame!
E'en to my ear has wrong'd it!—generous charmer!

Nor. Your frowns will blaſt what ſprung but by your ſmiles.

Som. I'll think a while—your counſel ſhall direct me.

Thou

Thou injur'd friendſhip, my griev'd ſoul inſpire
With awful juſtice, and vindictive fire!
Let my revenge, to match th' ungen'rous wrong,
Be ſwift as eagles, and as lions ſtrong!
Dreadful as flames by furious whirlwinds driven,
Or thunder burſting from offended heaven! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Northampton *and Counteſs of* Somerſet.

Nor. THE King comes here in private—then all's right,
And, in good time, we've ſtirr'd your huſband's anger.

Count. The courtiers are in Overbury's intereſt.

Nor. No matter—they'll deſert him in his fall:
Like Perſians they adore the riſing ſun,
But when the great man's glories ſhrink away,
Shrubs, which grew under him, ſhoot up ungrateful,
And brave him in declenſion—None aſſiſt him,
No kind hand lifts him from engulphing ruin,
But all join ſtrength to preſs him lower ſtill—
You have not heard, perhaps, that Overbury
Courts friendſhip with your Eſſex.

Count. How! with Eſſex!

Nor. What if he ſhould betray your letters to him?

Count. The villain dares not!

Nor. If he does, you're loſt——
What! know you of his love to Iſabella?

Count. Oh! name it not——
It cannot be—I've fear'd, but would not find it.

Nor. Wou'd 'twere a ſecret then—but ſee this packet,
Theſe are his letters to that Iſabella.
Their ſuperſcriptions wanting—happy that!
To tell how I acquir'd 'em, would be tedious:
Let it ſuffice, theſe undirected papers
Shall bear the force of proofs to Somerſet,
Moſt fatal to his friend. Sir Gervas Ell'ways,
Who bears a weighty part in this deſign,
Is coming tow'rds us—Pleaſe to leave him with me.
I am an exile from the royal preſence,
But you, the King expects, ſhould bleſs his eyes.

[*Exit Counteſs of* Somerſet.

That he ſees Eſſex I am well inform'd,
And blew that ſpark to raiſe her to a flame.

Enter Sir Gervas Elloways.

Let me congratulate my faithful Elloways!
The Tower-lieutenancy will now be yours,
For Somerſet has ſaid it.

Ell. My kind lord!

Nor.

Nor. Nay, I have news
That more will pleaſe you, if you love Northampton.
The man I hate will ſoon be in my power.
All the proud ſteps, by which he climb'd to greatneſs,
Sink from his feet, and let him fall to ruin.

Ell. Can Somerſet forſake him?

Nor. He deteſts him.

Ell. Prodigious change!—this news indeed ſurprizes!

Nor. To gain the unbeliever to my wiſhes,
I ſtirr'd his temper with ſuch cautious art,
That, ere his judgment cou'd exert its phlegm,
His blood took ferment from a warmth of paſſion:
Then, while his fi'ry ſpirit flam'd with rage,
In its full heat, I ſtamp'd it with revenge.

Ell. The depth of wiſdom flows, in all your actions,
Like a ſtrong current, which, oppos'd by piles,
Works gently thro', and ſaps the mound unſeen,
Till, gathering force, it pours reſiſtleſs in,
And the bank floats before it—End you there?

Nor. No—Overbury's death muſt crown my conduct!

Ell. There's danger there!

Nor. Not ſo—I've weigh'd it well.
Th' aſſaſſinating Spaniſh way's unſafe,
Suſpicion were its follower—and ſuſpicion
Wou'd, like a bloodhound, trace our ſteps too near!
What think you of the cloſe Italian's means?

Sure, ſilent poiſon?—Dare you be a friend?

Ell. I dare the worſt.

Nor. Know then, that Somerſet
Has noted Overbury as moſt intimate
With ſome, whoſe zeal is mark'd againſt the ſtate:
Now to inflame the King with jealouſy,
An embaſſy to Ruſſia will be offer'd him:
This love and policy forbid him taking,
And if he not accept it, all's confirm'd;
It ſpeaks him plainly loth to leave his faction,
And ſo he comes committed to your care.

Ell. The reſt may be compleated eaſily:
'Tis but to change the doubted officers,
And place ſuch round him as will ſuit our purpoſe.

Nor. No more—be ſecret.

Enter Somerſet.

Som. Good Sir Gervas Elloways!
I greet you gladly, with your new-giv'n honour,
Which the King's pleaſure, thus confirms by me.
[*Delivers a commiſſion.*

Ell. My lord, you bind me ever to your ſervice.

Som. Oh—my Northampton!

Nor. Why that ſigh, my lord?

Som. I have been thinking, when we loſe a friend,
'Tis like an eye pluck'd from its bleeding orb.
No more the other holds the joy of ſight,

But,

But, ceaſeleſs, weeps till it grows blind with anguiſh—
So mourns my widow'd ſoul for Overbury.

Nor. Why do you name him ſtill thus tenderly?
Methinks your wrongs ſhou'd riſe againſt your weakneſs,
And ſting you with reflection.

Som. Ay, mention thoſe, and I relapſe to fury!
My reſtleſs thoughts drive round like veering winds,
Forgetful of their center!—yet the ſoul,
Like a ſoft babe, inur'd to fooliſh fondneſs,
Is hard to wean from wailing—Oh! forgive me:
'Tis the laſt ſtruggle of expiring friendſhip.

Nor. Your paſſions late were wing'd, like vengeful whirlwinds,
Now they ſink, ſighing, to a gale of ſorrow!
Shame on your ſoftneſs—where's the ſoul of Somerſet?
Where's that fierce fire which us'd to kindle in you,
And ſparkle, from your eyes, in fierce reſentment?
What! all extinguiſh'd?

Som. No: I am ſtill the ſame,
I've the King's orders for this embaſſy,
And Overbury's ſent for.

Nor. If he refuſes,
We place him on the pinnacle of fate!
There ſhall big-gathering winds ſing round his head,
And whirl him to deſtruction—Ell'ways be ready.

[*Exit* Elloways.

Som. But, my good lord, this treachery ſtartles me,
'Tis an unmanly vengeance.

Nor. Fye, my lord!

Som. Why, rather, not accuſe him face to face,
And, with an open anger, prove the charge?

Nor. There may be guilt, you wou'd not wiſh to prove—
Look on theſe letters! ſent without direction!
Artful and ſafe that caution—Know you the hand?—
How ſoft are the contents!

Som. Wou'd I were blind!

Nor. Wou'd not he wrong his King who wrongs his friend!
Come, come, my lord—you muſt be won to wiſdom!
Tho' the ſoft dove brood, gall-leſs, o'er your breaſt,
Yet let the wary ſerpent arm your mind.

Som. O heaven! he comes! he ſhocks me with his preſence!

Nor. See!—Eſſex leaves him—had he been your friend,
He wou'd not thus be ſeen. My lord—farewel. [*Exit.*

Som. 'Tis death to meet him!—yet I cannot ſtir.

Enter Sir Thomas Overbury.

Over. My lord, I come obedient to your ſummons,
The

The force of friendſhip overſways my griefs,
And I muſt love you ſtill.
Som. Diſſembling villain! [*Aſide.*
I have a meſſage from the King, this morning,
That will, I doubt, ſurprize you—'tis his pleaſure,
That you prepare yourſelf, without delay,
For a ſhort embaſſy to Ruſſia.
Over. The warning's ſudden!
Som. The deſign is deep!
Perhaps too, not propos'd by your beſt friends.
Over. Now, my lov'd lord, I'll try your friend-
ſhip's faith!
When ſick'ning reaſon labours in the mind,
Advice is the ſoul's cordial—How ſhall I act?
Som. If honeſty's your guide, you cannot ſtray.
Over. If to be bleſt and honeſt were the ſame,
I ſhou'd not be unhappy.
Som. He ſeems innocent.
'Tis a hard ſtruggle to diſſemble thus! [*Aſide.*
Over. If your looks wrong you not, you are diſorder'd!
Som. Have you reſolv'd? I wait for your reply.
Over. So cool in your advice!—nay, now I read you!
Northampton and your wife!—Serpent and woman!
Have turn'd you 'gainſt your friend!
And your plain mind, unfaſhion'd for deceit,
Knows not to veil its frailty.

Som. Have a care——

Over. What! am I threaten'd too?—ungrateful Somerset!
Have I advis'd you with a brother's tenderneſs,
Pin'd for your peace, and made your cares my own,
To be rewarded thus?—Here end our friendſhip!
And, for my anſwer, I deſire a pauſe.

Som. Then I muſt tell the King, you're not reſolv'd?

Over. That as you pleaſe—I'll ſerve him till I die,
Till the reward of loyalty o'ertakes me:
For patriots ſtill muſt fall for ſtateſmens' ſafety,
And periſh by the country they preſerve.

Som. 'Tis dangerous, thus, to tax the royal gratitude!
I ſee you're raſh, and wou'd adviſe you better—
If, when you touch'd me in too weak a part,
I ſhrunk—'twas from quick ſenſe of aching pain.
I was to blame—I knew not what I ſaid—
Excuſe it as a friend.

Over. Said you, you were to blame?—if you're ſincere,
My fit of rage, like lightning on a deſart,
But flaſhes—and is loſt.

Som. Can he be falſe?
And yet I muſt not doubt—— [*Aſide.*

Over. What! ſtill uneaſy?

Som. You know, I'm rais'd on fortune's fav'rite ſpoke!
If I grow giddy, I ſhall move away,
And

And roll, at once, to ruin. ——

Over. Let me guard you—
And, to be near you, not accept this embaſſy—
Form ſome fair cauſe, and urge it as my anſwer.

Som. I'll to the King this inſtant, and attempt it.
[*Exit.*

Over. This meſſage, from the King, bears ſome deſign,
But I'm more touch'd with Somerſet's diſorder!
Let me ſtill mark him—As he paſſes on,
He ſtarts!—ſtops ſhort!—and ponders in ſuſpence!—
Now he proceeds!—All this ſhou'd bode ſome miſchief!

Enter the Counteſs of Somerſet.

Count. Now, now, ſupport me, pride, or I am loſt!
[*Aſide.*

Over. Ha! ſhe here!

Count. Why ſtart you, calm, inſulting man?
Is love a crime too great to be forgiven?
But thy cold ſoul admits no warmth of paſſion:
I, like the ſun, darted too fierce a blaze!
Yet, thy chill wiſhes
Dawn'd ſome ſick hope, when Iſabella's eyes,
Like a pale moon, gleam'd her faint beams upon thee.

Over. How! knows ſhe that? [*Aſide.*] When honour lights up love,
Th' illumin'd ſoul burns lambent with a flame,

Pure

Pure as the hallow'd altars—Such my hope!
Such were the wiſhes mov'd by Iſabella.

Count. How I diſdain thee!—yes, I ſcorn thee!—
hate thee!
Thou, who cou'dſt ſtoop to expoſe a woman's weak-
neſs!
To taint her fame, and blaſt her to the world!—
All my fierce paſſions riſe with that reflection,
Inward they rage—a winding train takes fire,
The flaſhy blaze runs ſwift thro' ev'ry vein,
And my brain ſplits with agony!

Over. You wrong me, Madam—I, with humbleſt
gratitude,
Thank'd and conceal'd your paſſion—If your fame
Is tainted—your divorce has caus'd it—Modeſty
Muſt guard a woman's ſeemings——
Oh! that my words, like the ſun's powerful rays,
Were with attraction arm'd—till, from your breaſt,
This flood of frailty roſe, exhal'd in ſighs,
Or flow'd away in ſtreams of ſoft repentance:

Count. Upbraider!

Over. I not upbraid your love, but your wild paſſions,
Which wou'd, like envious ſhades, eclipſe thoſe beauties,
That elſe, with juſtice, ſure, muſt charm mankind!
But, Madam, think—there's not a homely peaſant,
If grac'd with innocence, tho' nurs'd in toil,

But

But boasts more glory than a tainted grandeur.

Count. Preaching statue!
—Where are my letters?—thou detain'st 'em poorly,
With aim to awe my anger.

Over. Ere you ask'd 'em,
Mov'd by a conscious hope to ease your fears,
Honour induc'd me thus to give 'em up:
Now, they are yours again—But their effect
Will still live in me, and whene'er your image
Enriches my remembrance—the humblest gratitude
Will teach my heart new tenderness. [*Gives letters.*

Count. This generous act has waken'd love again,
And pity pleads against me—What shall I do!
If I continue here, and he thus charms me,
My scheme, at once, is air—Like jarring elements
My passions war—and thought opposing thought,
Shakes my whole frame, till I am mad with doubting.
[*Aside.*

Over. Why are you thus disturb'd?

Count. Can I so ill reward his generous heart,
As to apply these letters to his ruin,
Which might have ruin'd me, had he with-held 'em?
And yet I must—Fate's slippery ice has caught me,
And, if I not slide on, I sink for ever.
Let me not stay—O wretch! death hovers o'er thee!
He grasps a dart, and, in pale fury, shakes it
High o'er thy head!—Now, now it falls, and strikes thee!

I cannot

I cannot bear to see what I have caus'd.

[*Exit in confusion.*

Over. Or I'm ensnar'd—or madness seiz'd the countess.

Enter Isabella.

My Isabella!

Isa. Oh! let us join as friends, who meet in sorrow,
To weep!—and sigh!—and mingle mutual woes!

Over. What wou'd my love's soft fears divine of ill,
That merits this sweet sadness?

Isa. Oh! I am wild! and say I know not what—
This will explain.

Enter Sir Gervas Elloways, *and guards.*

Ell. Sir Thomas Overbury,
I come to bring you an unwelcome message;
'Tis the King's pleasure, that you stand confin'd,
Close in the Tower, a prisoner to the state.

Over. What have I done, that I should be a prisoner?

Ell. Has not the Earl of Somerset inform'd you?

Over. The Earl of Somerset!—What dost thou mean?
The polar star shall be no longer fix'd,
But turn delusive to the sailor's eye,
Sooner than Somerset prove false to me—
May I not see my friend?

Ell.

Ell. I dare not grant it.

Over. No!—that's hard, indeed!
I thought I cou'd have met the worſt, unmov'd;
[*Turns to* Iſabella.
But to ſee thee thus preſs'd with griefs not thine,
I cannot bear the pang which rend my ſoul!—
Teach me ſome art, but to aſſuage thy ſorrows,
And mine are griefs to ſmile at.

Iſa. The voice of muſic can compoſe diſtraction:
Oh! then, let thine but ſooth me into comfort;
Say ſomething ſoft and kind—But whither fly you?
Perhaps to death!

Over. What's death but loſing thee?
Life is a trifle, where no love enriches it;
And when the guiltleſs die the death of traitors,
The ſcaffold ſteps, but, like the patriarch's ladder,
Form an aſſent to heaven.

Iſa. Oh! talk not thus!
There's madneſs in that thought.

Over. Nay, do not weep!
Thy grief attracts with ſuch a melting force—
That my loſt ſoul evaporates to air,
Glides in each breath, and mingles with thy ſighs—
Help manhood, or I'm loſt!—lead to the Tower.

Iſa. That place bodes ruin—there, the good ſixth Henry,
Clarence,

Clarence, and royal Edward's infants fell—
Such secret death, perhaps, may prove thy fate.

Over. Why doſt thou fright thyſelf at fancy'd ills?

Iſa. I have a thouſand, thouſand anxious fears!—
No cheering hope dawns thro' the cloudy woe,—
'Tis darkneſs all—What will not malice dare?
But if I muſt——

Over. Oh! I cou'd gaze for ever!
Thus, when high ſeas ſwell foaming o'er the coaſt,
The wretch, who treads the dangerous beach is loſt;
Plung'd in his fate, like me, he ſtrives to riſe,
And ſeeks the ſwallow'd land with wiſtful eyes!
But, as his arms extend to reach the ſhore,
The waves o'erwhelm him, and he's ſeen no more.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

ACT IV. SCENE *The Tower.*

Northampton *and* Elloways *meet.*

Nor. ELL'WAYS be ſwift, for Somerſet's unſettled!
The Counteſs too, who lately urg'd his death,
Melts in a fit of ſoftneſs from her purpoſe!
Before the ſtream of ruin then rolls rapid,

To

To bear him down the tide—For, if it turns,
'Twill overwhelm us all.

Ell. Now, by my soul,
The youthful warrior, flush'd with his first hopes,
Burns not with half that heat for fame and conquest,
Which fires my wishes to compleat your will.

Nor. Weston and Franklin—are they both resolv'd?

Ell. They are.

Nor. Have they the wine the Countess has prepar'd?

Ell. They have,
And bring it as a present from Earl Somerset.

Nor. Then he, who late, by royal favour shone,
That favour veil'd, shall straight be dark again.
So waters, at hot noon, aspire in steams,
And thin'd by heat, float gay aloft in air!
But when the sun's exhaling power withdraws,
Chill'd by the cold of night, they fall in dews,
And mix with humble dust, like Overbury.

Ell. See, my good lord, where Isabella comes,
To visit in the Tower her prison'd lover!

Nor. My faithful Ell'ways, watch my rival well;
And if your ear catch a suspicious sound,
Bring me immediate notice. [*Exit* Ell.

Enter Isabella.

So, Madam, your proud hero falls his plume!

Isa.

Isa. Is that a Noble's voice? The brave, I thought,
Scorn'd all advantage o'er a fallen foe,
And rais'd him to be worthy their revenge.

Nor. Since there's a ſtorm upon your angry brow,
I am not arm'd to meet, I muſt retire. [*Exit.*

Isa. So, villains, when they gain th'aſcent of power,
Like ravens, pois'd before the glorious ſun,
Spread a black cloud, and darken all beneath.

Enter Overbury, *followed by* Elloways *liſtening.*

Over. Are you thus kind? bleſt with your lovely preſence,
A priſon is a paradiſe—ſweet mourner!
Matchleſs in joy—but in thy grief all heavenly!
In thee, as in a dew-drop on a flower,
A thouſand mingled beauties glittering play,
Which riſe, as the eye turns, in ſtill new proſpects,
And in each different light, refract new luſtre.

Isa. Why wilt thou charm me thus?—thy tuneful voice
Floats ſoft like muſic, melting in the winds!
A flutt'ring rapture fills my trembling breaſt,
Swells in each vein, and pants with every thought!
Yet do I view thee, with ſuch dangers round thee,
That e'en thy ſight is painful!

Over.

Over. Wer't not for thee, my ſoul wou'd wing her flight,
To reſt in realms of everlaſting bliſs.

Iſa. How know'ſt thou that?—Weigh firſt what is the ſoul:
'Tis not a ſhade that will diſſolve in air,
Nor matter which, by time, can be conſum'd:
Oh! then, be cautious, for the beſt are frail;
Venture not raſhly, on an unknown being—
E'en the moſt perfect ſhun the brink of death,
And ſhudder at the proſpect of futurity.

Over. What means my ſoul?

Iſa. A thouſand deaths are hov'ring round thy head!
If I have e'er deſerv'd thy love—Oh! think
Thy guardian angel now inſpires my tongue,
And warns thee, if thou canſt, to 'ſcape diſguis'd!

Ell. I've heard enough. [*Exit unſeen.*

Over. No; ſafe in innocence, I'll dare their malice.
To fly, wou'd be to leave my fame unclear'd,
My fame, much dearer to me than my life!

Iſa. Forgive me, if I err;
'Tis but a fault that ſprings from too much love!
Should'ſt thou be loſt!—Oh! think upon my griefs,
See me diſtracted, without hope of comfort,
Profaning heaven, reading the air with ſhrieks,
Burſting with groans, and raving with deſpair!

Over. Why was I born to make thee thus unhappy?
But see, where one observes!
'Tis dangerous here to talk—To-night farewel,
And if to-morrow blesses me again,
I shall have news to tell you. [*Exit.*

Isa. Till then, farewel.

Enter Cleora *in haste.*

Cle. My friend, forgive me, if officious zeal
Forc'd me to seek you here—your foe, the Countess—

Isa. What of the Countess?

Cleo. Flies about disorder'd!
So stung with guilt, no place can give her ease!
Wild 'twixt the sallies of remorse and love,
She wrote these lines, and trusted 'em with me;
I think it not a treachery to betray 'em.

Isa. 'Tis pious treachery that reveals a mischief;
'Tis justice to yourself, and to the world.
[*Looks on the letter.*
To Overbury!—How my heart beats at it!

Cleo. She there, repeats, and urges an old flame,
Proffers him freedom, wou'd partake his flight,
And owns the wiles that have seduc'd her lord.
Nay, more—the guards are, by her agents, brib'd,
And your name's us'd to cover the deceit,
That, should they fail, she might be still secure.

Isa.

Iſa. Here too, ſhe urges him to feign ſome illneſs,
That, ſo retir'd to reſt, and none left near him,
She in the ſilent darkneſs introduc'd,
May find him in his chamber, and inſtruct him
What means may bring him ſafety:
Fate ſent this clue to unravel all her falſhood;
Flatter her artfully with his compliance:
And if ſhe comes—But ſee, the Earl of Somerſet.
Night ſteals upon us faſt—Be ſure you bring her.

[*Exit* Cleora.

Enter Earl of Somerſet.

Som. My Iſabella!—why that mournful brow?
Why do thoſe eyes, that ſparkled gladneſs round 'em,
Loſe their keen luſtre now, and look ſo languid?

Iſa. Shou'd I forget, my lord, that fatal day,
When my dear father's trembling hand preſt yours,
His dying eyes, wet with paternal tears,
While agonizing ſweats bedew'd his face,
To you, my lord, he rais'd his falt'ring voice,
And gave me to your care? Kind was the thought,
And pleas'd, he bade farewel—and breath'd his laſt.

Som. Have I not us'd thee with the tend'reſt care,
And chear'd thy virtue with the ſmiles of fortune?

Iſa. Oh! my good lord, you've been a father to me,
And 'tis for you theſe ſwelling ſighs riſe ſad,
And my tears flow for gratitude.

Som. What mean'ſt thou?

Iſa. If Overbury wrong'd—

Som. No more of Overbury!

My child, avoid him, as thou wou'dſt thy ruin.

Iſa. You are miſled—

Som. The ſubject's harſh—farewel.

Iſa. You muſt not go—thus on my knees, I beg you,
For your own ſake, but hear me—you're betray'd.
Oh! think how dear this man was to your ſoul!
By friendſhip join'd, you comforted each other;
Joy crown'd your days, your minds were then ſerene,
Your thoughts had harmony, and you were bleſt.

Som. Indeed, I thought ſo.

Iſa. Oh! reflect again!
Why have you caſt him thus unkindly from you,
And open'd your dear breaſt to vile Northampton?

Som. Why doſt thou injure thus my lord Northampton?

Iſa. One, who wou'd undermine an orphan's virtue,
Is ſure unworthy of her guardian's friendſhip.

Som. And cou'd Northampton that?

Iſa. I bluſh t'affirm it.
Yet more your virtue wanders in the dark!
The Counteſs—

Som. Who!—I charge thee, name not her!
Shou'd I but hear a word to taint my wife,
'Twould urge me ſo, I might forget my nature,
And uſe thee harſhly! *Iſa.*

Iſa. 'Tis death to undeceive you!
But, in the cauſe of virtue, I am arm'd
To meet all dangers boldly—be prepar'd,
For I muſt wound you with ſuch piercing accents,
That your poor heart, I fear, will bleed with anguiſh!

Som. Suſpenſe is the worſt rack—ſpeak what thou know'ſt.

Iſa. Read this—'twill ſpeak all for me.

[*Gives a letter.*

Som. 'Tis my wife's hand—ha! To Sir Thomas Overbury!
A ſtrange direction that! where had it you?

Iſa. From one ſhe truſted as her meſſenger.

Som. Sure 'tis ſome miſt, which hell has rais'd to blind me!
My eyes belie her—let me again peruſe it!

Iſa. 'Tis as I thought. [*Aſide.*

Som. 'Tis all black forgery!——
Falſe Iſabella!

Iſa. Who is falſe, my lord?

Som. Why thou art falſe—I prithee, own thou art;
For ſhould an angel charge her with theſe crimes,
I fear I ſhou'd miſname that angel, fiend!

Iſa. 'Tis but to wait her preſence, if you doubt it;
Night is already round us, and ere long,
She comes, conceal'd, to find him—Be you witneſs,

And then, who's falſe, diſcover.

Som. If thou art ſo, fly, where I ne'er may ſee thee!
But if thou'rt true, then I'm a wretch indeed.

Iſa. My lord, retire—I think, ſhe comes already.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Counteſs of Somerſet *and* Cleora.

Count. O my Cleora, whither am I going?
But thou art faithful, nor wilt chide my frailties!
I go t'atone my Overbury's wrongs,
To meet my love—my love!—What's then my huſband?
Hold brain—reſiſt that ruſhing rack of thought—
The night, now brooding o'er her gloomy ſhades,
Owns not a ſpectre half ſo foul as I am.
Oh ſtate of horror! Oh deſpair! O ſhame!

Cleo. Yet think—

Count. Fain wou'd I—but all thought forſakes me!
My flame revives!—each fit comes ſtronger on me!
Varying convulſions torture every nerve!
I love! I rage!—hate—fear—and love again!
And burn, and die with a whole war of paſſions!

Cleo. But will you ſee him?

Count. See him?—Oh! I muſt—
My ſoul will have it ſo—the wrongs, I meant him,
Require atonement, more than love can give him,
Come—guide me, my Cleora! [*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter Northampton *and* Elloways.

Nor. Eſcaping! ſay'ſt thou?
Ell. What I then heard was little.
But now a truſted yeoman of the guard
Betray'd their whole deſign of preſent flight;
But why have you, thus led me thro' the darkneſs?
Nor. The darkneſs beſt befits my purpos'd vengeance.
Ell. What means my lord by vengeance?
Nor. The poiſon not yet given—my ſword ſhall end him.
Secure the paſſage—bar the outward doors,
While I reſolve within, where Weſton left us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Somerſet *and the Counteſs, meeting in the dark.*

Count. 'Tis wond'rous dark! and night wears double horror!
Each ſtep, methinks, I hear my huſband's voice!
The creep of diſtant whiſpers damps my ſoul!
Hark! how the thunder rolls! the wind too roars!
Who's that, my Overbury?
Som. Yet hold my heart! [*Aſide.*
Count. You had my letter then?
Som. I had—Oh heaven!
Count. Reach me your hand, and lead me to your chamber!

For I have much to ſay—but ſtay—Cleora
Waits me hard by—I'll caution her a moment,
And find you here again. [*Exit.*

Som. Why do I live?
Let me turn wild!—Or tear out my fond heart,
That cou'd be thus far wrong'd, and not diſcern it!
O thou falſe woman! O my injur'd friend!
Mad, raſh, deluded Somerſet!

Enter Northampton *from a private door in the back ſcene; a light within.*

Nor. Now, Overbury, die! [*Draws.*

Som. Villain!—Northampton! [*Draws.*

Nor. Save me, ſome angel, from this ſtrange illuſion!

Som. View my eyes well!—do they not flaſh with fury?
And tell thee, that 'tis Somerſet thou look'ſt on?

Nor. Northampton was not born to look with fear,
Tho' hell blaz'd angry in the eyes of Somerſet.
My honour's equal!—my deſcent more noble!
Come, we miſtake each other—as a friend,
I'd moderate this rage.

Som. Thou ſycophant!
Thou wouldſt again betray me to thy friendſhip,
To ruin, with more eaſe, my Iſabella.

Nor. Ha!

Som. But she is proof against thy base assaults:
My wife was easy, and success there met thee,
And Overbury was to fall your victim.

Nor. No more—I can no longer brook this railing;
What'er I do, I always dare to answer!
Let this defend it all—

[*Fight*, Northampton *disarmed.*

Som. Why art thou living in the power of Somerset?
I wish thee dead, but dare not kill thee basely;
Give me the chance once more— [*Offers his sword.*

Nor. No; take my life;
'Tis now not worth defending.

Som. Live, and repent!—and be as curs'd as I am!
Go—save me from the pain thy presence gives me!
Now, whither shall I wander? [*Exit* Northampton.

Going, meets the Countess entering.

Death and confusion!

Count. I heard, or I'm deceiv'd, the clash of weapons,
Yet was the passage barr'd—yon gleam of light
Shews a drawn sword bent hither.

Som. Tremble at it—'tis the sword of justice!

Count. Ha! let me not betray myself—'tis Somerset.

[*Aside.*

What mean you, Sir? methinks your words sound angry—

Som.

Som. Traitreſs! falſe! foul! fickle—damn'd—lovely traitreſs!
Know'ſt thou this letter?—thou ungrateful woman!
Count. Now I am loſt indeed!
Som. What can thy guilt expect?
Count. You will not kill me?
Som. Not kill thee, ſay'ſt thou! yes, deceiver! Hear me;
Hadſt thou as many lives as thou haſt crimes,
My fury wou'd reach all—wrong'd love and friendſhip,
With double cry, demand thy death in vengeance!
Count. Oh! but do hear me.
Som. Not one ſiren word.
Count. Oh! by the endearing ſoftneſs of that boſom,
Look but on her you lov'd ſo much! ſo lately!
See how ſhe pants for life! and begs for mercy!
Let me die, ſlow, ſome ling'ring death of ſorrow,
But ſend me not to the eternal bar,
With all my crimes about me!
Som. Do, crocodile, weep on—thy tears become thee.
Think what I ſuffer! think how thou haſt wrong'd me!
Oh! I will ſtab thee!—tho' my heart-ſtrings burſt.
Count. Yet, but a moment, hear me!
Som. No—I will not;
Be dumb for ever—for, whene'er you ſpeak,
You bring a baſe infection o'er my anger,
And I, at once, grow ſick with pity—Off!

Why

Why cling'ſt thou to me?

Count. O ſpurn me!—drag me—
Yet my poor limbs ſhall graſp thee to the laſt,
And e'en my dying groans plead ſoft for pardon.

Som. Wherefore, juſt heav'n, has guilt ſuch power to charm?

Oh!—riſe, and take thoſe mournful eyes away;
Thy beauty, and my love combine to ſave thee,
And my ſword turns its point againſt my purpoſe.
I cannot ſee thee bleed!—Oh! my torn heart!
Ungrateful! go—

Fly from my rage!—far hence, on ſome lone iſle,
Safe in thy frauds, and pleas'd with ruin, ſmile;
But ſhun theſe ſhameful eyes, which thus deplore
Thy loſs—yet never muſt behold thee more.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Somerſet *ſolus.*

HOW have I wander'd thro' a maze of errors,
And labour'd for deſtruction!—Of mankind,
I had but one true friend, and him, alone,
Of all mankind, have wrong'd—Reproachful thought!
Oh! Peace of mind! thou boſom balm of nature!
Thou that canſt make the labourer's miſery ſweet,

And

And cauſe e'en ſmiles amidſt the pangs of death,
Where ſhall I find thee?

Enter Iſabella.

Come not near me!
Let me not hear thee ſpeak, leſt I betray thee,
But fly me as a deſp'rate, dangerous villain.

Iſa. I come, my lord, to reconcile your ſoul
To the ſweet joys of peace—

Som. Talk not of peace! 'tis gone! 'tis fled with honour!
Honour, once loſt, can never be retriev'd!
My thoughts are furies all!—and turn upon me!
I feel their whips!—They laſh me with remorſe!
My brain grows hot!—Hell glows in my mad boſom!

Iſa. Your friend yet knows not how you were miſled.

Som. But there's a ſenſe of ſhame that knows it all!
Tho' mountains ſhadow'd me, they cou'd not hide it!
My red'ning cheeks, and my moiſt eyes wou'd ſpeak it!
Let me fly, far as the vaſt ocean rolls,
Rather than ſee the friend I've baſely injur'd.

Iſa. Fly but to Overbury—tell him all!
And, once more met in the ſtrict band of friendſhip,
United, riſe the pillars of your country.

Som. How muſt he ſcorn me, when he knows my treachery!

I cannot

I cannot bear that thought!

Ifa. Yet the mild king—

Som. For thy poor father's ſufferings in his cauſe,
The royal ear will liſten to thy pleadings:
Oh! fly, and ſwiftly ſave my friend from ruin!

Ifa. But look, my lord!—See where the counteſs comes!

Som. What ſay'ſt thou? ha!—I cannot bear their preſence!
Oh! for a whirlwind's rage to ſnatch her from me!
A hell of miſchief kindles in her eyes,
And horrors blaze around her!—Let's avoid her!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Northampton *and Counteſs of* Somerſet.

Nor. Now, haughty Somerſet! I'm well reveng'd!
My ſullen genius tow'rs, with ſcorn, above thee,
And ſmiles at diſappointment.

Count. My lord Northampton,
Tho' ſtrongly urg'd, I feel a woman's ſoftneſs!
Revenge, remorſe, and love divide my ſoul,
Like three wild ſtreams that ruſh againſt each other!

Nor. Yet, ſtill, be reſolute,
Summon your reaſon to your paſſion's aid!
Think how you're treated by your angry lord,
Menac'd, caſt off, and but revenge can ſave you.

Count.

Count. Now you have urg'd the flint again to ſparkle,
And flaſh'd up all the latent fire within me!
Die, Overbury!—Somerſet!—die all!
Let the world burn to be my funeral pile,
And nature groan as I do!

Enter Elloways.

Nor. What news, Elloways?

Ell. The deed is done!
So deadly is the poiſon he has ſwallow'd,
There's not a nerve but has receiv'd its death:
Horror and madneſs ſhall infect his brain,
Till ev'ry ſtruggling vital, torn with pangs,
Muſt burſt at once, and tortur'd life forſake him.

Count. Mean'ſt thou all this of Overbury?

Ell. Of him—We brought the wine which you prepar'd,
As a ſent pledge of friendſhip from your lord;
Straight, with an eager haſte, he ſnatch'd the cup!—
Give me the draught, ſaid he!—then ſwell'd the brim,
And, thro' his lips, he drain'd it to the laſt.
And now there's not a health-reſtoring herb,
Which the ſun ſmiles on, can expel th' infection.

Count. Was it the wine I ſent?

Ell. Madam, it was.

Count. Then ſhall I never know a moment's peace!
Villain,

Villain, be curſt!—What have we done, Northampton?

Nor. A deed, which is not now to be recall'd.

Count. And doſt think heav'n will conceal this murder?

No! we ſhall be purſu'd with hourly vengeance!
Dreams will diſcloſe it; or, if night wants eyes,
Lightning will flaſh, and point us out to juſtice.

Nor. Will you be mad?

Count. I will—you have undone me!
Plung'd me for ever in the depth of miſery!
Hark!—there's a tell-tale wind groans hollow under us,
And the earth heaves with wonder!

Nor. Her grief diſtracts her!

Count. 'Tis falſe! Thy tongue ſhall never more delude me!
Ha!—Murder's ſhriek'd already in my ears!
Hark! Heav'n rings with murder!—the red clouds
Rain a whole ſea of ſmoaking blood upon us!
Oh! I am ſtain'd all over!—Murder!—Murder!

[*Runs off.*

Ell. My lord, this fit may prove a dangerous frenzy.

Nor. Our lives are ſet upon this ſingle caſt.
Retire we to ſome ſafe retreat a while,
Where we may watch th' event. [*Exit.*

Ell. What ſhall I do?

Fly

Fly from my poſt I cannot—that pleads guilty!
Poor Overbury comes!

Enter Sir Thomas Overbury.

How fares my noble priſoner?

Over. Why juſt as noble priſoners ever fare,
Like lambs encompaſs'd by devouring wolves,
Or harmleſs birds with kites and ravens round 'em.

Ell. I cannot hear him ſpeak—his preſence pains me. [*Exit.*

Over. I know not why, but I am ſhock'd of late!
My dreams are dreadful—Be it as it may;
While virtue arms me, what have I to fear?
This cold clay cottage is but the ſoul's priſon,
And death, at worſt, is but a ſurly friend,
Who conquers to give liberty.

Enter Somerſet.

'Tis well, my lord, you can at laſt remember me,
But had my Somerſet been thus confin'd,
I had not learnt to ſhun him.

Som. Oh, my friend!
I'm not the Somerſet, whom once you knew;
I'm alter'd much of late.

Over. Ay, thou art marry'd!

Som. That was the fatal rock we both have ſplit on!
You,

You, like a ſkilful mariner, diſcern'd it—
But I, bewitch'd by the curſt ſiren's voice,
Sail'd on, regardleſs, 'till we ſtruck on ruin.

Over. Why—doſt thou repent it?

Som. Repent it, ſaid you?—
Oh! I cou'd rave!—but, 'tis too late a penitence,
For I have wrong'd thy friendſhip, and undone thee!

Over. Nay, that I ſtill believe thou cou'dſt not do!

Som. Thou doſt not know how baſe thy friend has been!—
Oh! that fair devil has enſnar'd my ſoul,
And ſtain'd it o'er with falſhood—I, led by her,
Accus'd thee to the king.

Over. Forbid it, heav'n!
Leſt I grow ſick of life—and curſe mankind!

Som. Oh!—'tis too true! Wrought by my faithleſs wife,
And curſt Northampton—I contriv'd thy ruin!

Over. Why look'ſt thou, then, like man, who art a monſter?

Som. Yet by the memory of our dear friendſhip!—

Over. How dares thy tongue profane the name of friendſhip?
Haſte to the king!—clear up my ſully'd fame,
Or, may'ſt thou always bear ſome mark of traitor,
That every one may know, deſpiſe, and ſhun thee.

Som. Hear me but ſpeak—

Over. Why ſhould'ſt thou grate my ear?
The bird of death's ſhrill ſcream—the hiſs of ſerpents,
Are muſic to thy voice!—my ſick'ning ſoul
Faints at thy preſence—and thy ſtay wou'd kill me!

Som. Yet I muſt ſtay—'till you forgive, or pity me.

Over. Name not forgiveneſs—nor expect my pity.
Be gone! there's treachery couch'd in this delay!
Mean'ſt thou to bear more miſchief to the king?

Som. Rather than pierce me with ſuch words as theſe,
Strike through my heart, that bleeds to 've done you wrong,
Here—take my ſword—kill me—but, as I fall,
Reach me thy hand—ſay, but thou haſt forgiv'n me!
And I ſhall die in peace.

Over. Take back thy ſword—I wou'd not uſe it baſely,
Thou know'ſt, I wou'd not—Go, for ever from me!
And when I hear of an ungrateful wretch,
A fawning ſlave, who ſmiles, while he betrays—
Then will I think of Somerſet.

Som. Diſtraction!
Canſt thou? but, peace—I have deſerv'd it all!
Life's a diſeaſe, which I want ſtrength to bear,
And wiſh for death to cure me—What was I born to?

Shame

Shame on the guilt that bids me bear theſe ſcorns,
And not dare think 'em injuries.

Over. *(After a long pauſe)*—Oh! Somerſet!

[*Both ſtand ſilent:* Overbury *obſerves the poſture of* Somerſet.

Can all this grief be real?

Som. What ſhall I ſay?

Over. Had any other thus contriv'd my ruin,
I cou'd have borne it with a manly patience!
But from thy hand! my friend! my very ſelf!—
Such unexpected wrongs have ſhook my ſoul!
But—I forgive thee all—

Som. Oh! joy! Oh, friend—
Forgive my ſoftneſs too! my tears will flow,
While I re-join thee, thus, to my glad breaſt.

Over. I feel my heart bound high with throbbing tranſport!
And wou'd ſpeak more, but the ſlow-riſing words
Die in big, unborn accents on my tongue.
I feel, e'en now, a faintiſh damp all o'er me,
And I am ſick at heart—But here comes one,
Whoſe heav'nly brightneſs can diſperſe all clouds!
My life! my Iſabella!

Enter Iſabella, *running into his arms.*

Iſa. Live—live, my Overbury!

Scarce can I ſpeak my tranſport!—but the king!
The gracious king—

Over. What of the king, my love?

Iſa. Has yielded to my ſuit in thy behalf,
And giv'n thee liberty!

Over. I thank thy goodneſs!
And bleſſings croud about his royal head,
Who heard my Iſabella's prayer with pity.
How my ſoul ſwells with ecſtaſy!—my friend!
My Iſabella!—Why do you not rejoice?
Rejoice in love!—in friendſhip! liberty!

Som. Live long thus bleſs'd.

Over. Here, in ſoft ſighs, I'll pour my pleaſures forth—
Gaze!—'till I e'en grow giddy with delight!
Now, heav'n, thou art too kind.

Iſa. Oh happy day!
So ſweet a calm, as my late cares are huſh'd in,
Ne'er yet ſucceeded ſuch a threatning tempeſt?
But you, methinks, look pale!

Over. No—ſay not ſo;
My heart is but oppreſs'd, and ſick with tranſport!—
Another ſtart!—that rapture was ſo ſtrong,
It ſhot quite thro', and trembled to my ſoul!
Another yet!—nay, now I ſcarce ſupport it—
My ſpirits ſink, exhauſted with delight,

And

And nature reels beneath it.

Ifa. Oh! help! he faints!

Som. Heav'n! a cold dew,
Like that of death, o'erſpreads his icy temples.
Help! who waits there? [*Enter Attendants.*

Ifa. My love! my Overbury!
Return to life—'tis Iſabella calls!

Over. Where, where are now my joys?
All fled at once—Oh! Somerſet! I'm poiſon'd!

Som. Good heaven forbid!

Over. The wine!—the wine you ſent!

Som. Say'ſt, thou, I ſent?
Alas! you are impos'd on!

Over. Then 'twas thy wife,
And ſhe diſguis'd it with thy powerful name.

Som. Ten thouſand plagues o'ertake her for the deed!
Oh! if ſhe acted this unnatural guilt,
May all the woes of vengeance be her portion!
Haunt her, pale ghoſts! Eternal anguiſh grind her!
Laſh her, ye furies! Adders, twiſt around her!
And let deſpair and endleſs torment ſeize her!

Over. Ha!—what a ſhoot was there!—my blood boils in me!
Flames wind about my breaſt—my brain burns red,
And my eyes ſwim in a blue ſea of ſulphur!

Stand off!—and let me breathe!—what's that grim
form,
That ſtalks along! and creeps ſo pale upon me?
I know the meagre phantom now!—'tis death!
He's gone!—and now the heav'ns all open to me!
A flight of angels ſwoop upon my head,
And clap their wings about me!

Som. What a ſlave is man, when paſſion maſters him?
My want of reaſon is the curſed ſource
Of all their miſeries: But I'm trebly curs'd!
I feel for him, for her, and for myſelf.
What place in hell is there reſerv'd for me?
Sure that which holds the greateſt ſhare of pain!

Over. There's death again!
What unmov'd! beamleſs! hollow! limy eyes
The bone-built monſter ſtares with! there he ſtruck
me!
'Tis done!—I mount!—I riſe above the clouds!
My brain grows giddy!—now 'tis wond'rous hot!
The rays ſcorch ſtrong—the ſtars ſpout ſtreaming fire!
I'll ſhade me in the moon's dark body!—Hold!
The ſun's reflection's there—Oh! help!—defend me!

Som. What can I do to eaſe thee?

Over. Who touch'd me?—'twas a cold, and
deadly hand!

It

It makes me ſhrink!—ſave me! where am I now?
I'm chain'd in the chill region of the north!
My blood's all froſt!—and paſſing my hot veins,
It hiſſes in its motion!—The bleak winds
Dip their broad wings in ſeas of melted ſnow,
And ſweep whole winter o'er me!—I ſhiver at it!
My teeth are turn'd to ice, and, as they chatter,
Break in their ſtriking—Where's friendſhip now to warm me?

Som. My friend!—my Overbury!

Over. Oh, Somerſet!
Where have I been?—my life is at a period!
Poor Iſabella!—ſhe's o'erwhelm'd with grief!
Let me conjure thee, by my dying friendſhip,
To comfort all her ſorrows!

Som. Wherefore do I not rave? But heav'n is juſt!
To loſe my ſenſes, is to loſe my pain.
Oh! I reſign me to th' impartial hand
Of juſtice, nor dare murmur at my fate.

Over. Hark! the wind roars!—the ſeas begin to ſwell!
The billows roll!—now! now they drive upon me!
Oh! ſave me, or I'm loſt!—what! muſt I periſh?
Is there no hold?—not one kind, friendly plank!
Helpleſs indeed!—thus in the gulf, I ſink—
Never to riſe again. [*Dies.*

Iſa.

Isa. Hover a while, dear shade, and I'll o'ertake thee.
Oh !. for a dagger now !—Death, give me ease !
He comes !—I feel him at my heart already !
He brings me all I wish !

Som. Alas ! she swoons !
Be quick, and bear ger gently from the body—
But, be sure, guard her with the tenderest care,
Lest her distraction shou'd commit self-violence.

[Isa. *led off.*

Now dear, departed friend—'twere just, that I,
The wretch, whose crimes have been the cause of all,
Shou'd, on these clay-cold lips, breathe out my last.

Enter Officer of the guards.

Off. My lord, your pardon, but you're here a prisoner :
Your wife has, in a fit of raving frenzy,
Confess'd the murder on Sir Thomas Overbury.
Sir Gervas Ell'ways, and the rest impeach'd,
Are seiz'd—and say, the wine was sent from you.

Som. Oh ! the vile traitress !—guard her from my sight—
But leave me here—and let me slow expire.

Close

Close by the truest friend, and best of men!
Oh!—wou'd the world be warn'd by my example!

Fly, ye fond youth, the guilty fair-one's arms,
Nor judge their excellence by outward charms;
They, who, for faithless love, true friends betray,
Chuse glitt'ring toys, and throw rich pearls away.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY AARON HILL, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BRET,

IN THE CHARACTER OF ISABELLA.

WELL!—'tis a ſhameful breach, in honour's laws,
To court the credit, and betray the cauſe!
But, faithful to my ſex—Pray ladies! hear me—
And if the poet murmurs, ſmile, and clear me.
He bids me ſay, Sir Tom was juſt—brave—witty!
Troth! he was e'en too good for woman's pity—
I find, by hiſt'ries of the poor ſoul's life,
He wrote that frightful poem, call'd—THE WIFE.
There, with cold rules, he damps the glow of beauty;
And fetters free-born will, by ſneaking duty!
His huſbands are mere tyrants—and no wonder!—
They 've natural right, he ſays, to keep us under.
Pleas'd—or not pleas'd—we muſt, it ſeems, lie quiet:
And rather ſtarve to death than mend our diet!
Prompt, in obedience, wait the ſovereign's motion,
And do, or ſuffer, with reſign'd devotion!
'Tis a fine leſſon, truly!—Blaſt Sir Thomas—
Or—keep the galling yoke of wedlock from us!
Cou'd wives but once ſuch paſſive grace inherit,
Bleſs us!—what active huſbands wou'd they merit!

EPILOGUE.

This the fine Overbury! whoſe juſt fate
You 've ſeen, to-night, dreſs'd out in tragic ſtate!
He make a hero!—He attract compaſſion!
Heaven keep theſe witty huſbands out of faſhion!
Had he been mine, I'd paid him for his poem;
And made him feel, what thanks we women owe him!
Though lovers pleaſe—and mine is a ſtark new one,
My feign'd Sir Thomas ſuffers, for the true one:
Bleſs'd be the doſe, by which our match miſcarry'd;
Heavens!—how I'd hated him, had we been marry'd!
As to my errand—Ere your ſmiles I pray,
Thus make him mend the moral of his play:
Truſt not repenting Somerſet's opinion,
Nor ſtrive to ſhake our ſex's fix'd dominion.
Woman does, ev'n in yielding, conqueſt gain;
And man, howe'er contending, toils in vain!
Learn, ye loſt things! for diſobedience hated,
To what ſure ſuff'rings raſh mens lives are fated!
Wiſely be rul'd:—move on the way we draw ye—
And let due ſenſe of power ſuperior awe ye—
Elſe, will your ev'ry woe be ſtill kept waking,
And your proud hearts, waſte half an age in breaking:
Care ſhall corrode your thoughts—Deſpair invade ye!
Dangers riſe round!—and horns want power to ſhade ye.

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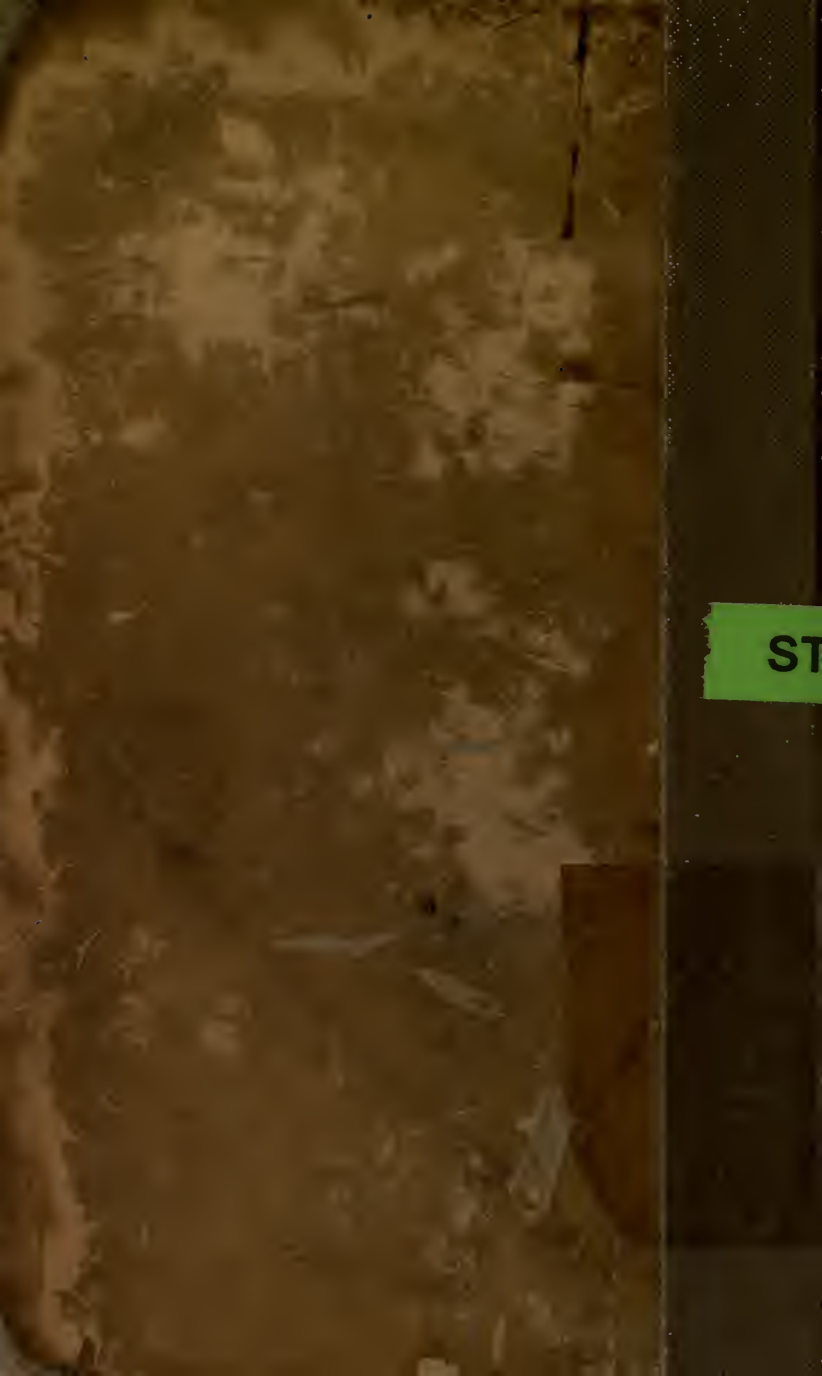
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